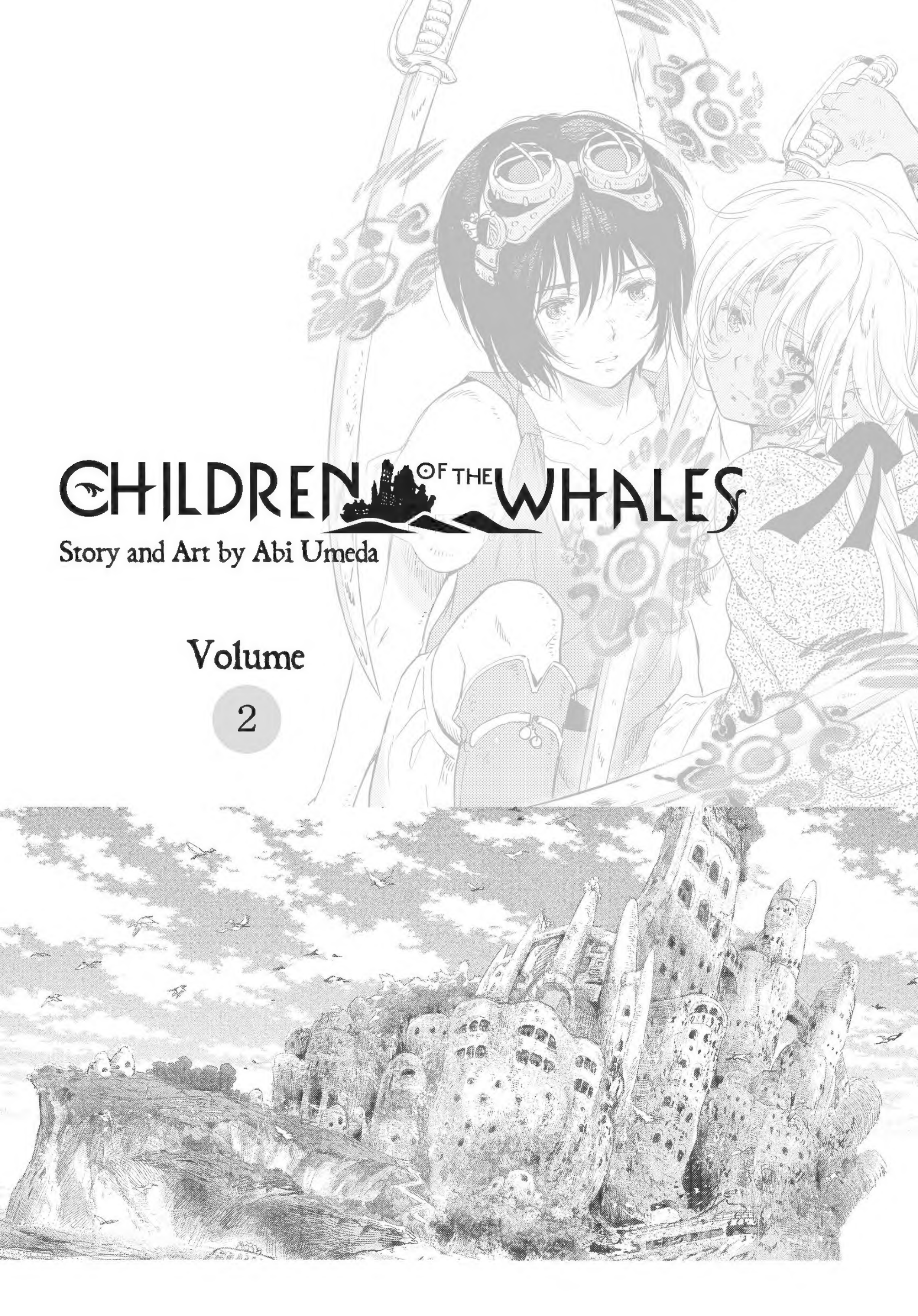

CHILDREN OF THE WHALES
2
ABI UMEDA


CHILDREN OF THE WHALES
Story and Art by Abi Umeda
Volume
2

Characters



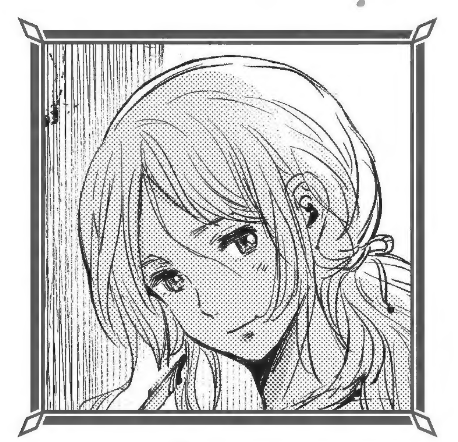
Lykos

The girl found aboard the abandoned ship drifting near the Mud Whale. An apátheia, one of the emotionless soldiers from the empire. But she feels close to Chakuro and his friends.



Chakuro

The young archivist of the Mud Whale. He has hypergraphia, a disorder that compels him to record everything.



Suou

A candidate to be the next mayor of the Mud Whale. Chakuro and the other Marked trust him.



Ouni

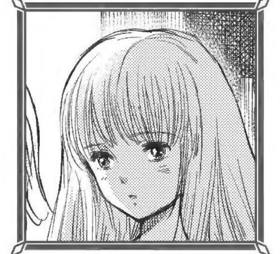
The most accomplished thymia user on the Mud Whale. The leader of the moles, a group of troublemakers.





Taisha

Mayor of the Mud Whale, a figurehead. Died during the apátheia attack.



Neri

Caretaker of the tower where the Committee of Elders lives. She is kind to Lykos.



Sami

Chakuro's childhood friend. Died during the apátheia attack.





Thymia

Ninety percent of the inhabitants of the Mud Whale possess this psychic power, which allows them to move objects with their minds, but they have drastically shortened lives.



A Record of the Mud Whale and the Sea of Sand

Year 93 of the sand exile.

The Mud Whale drifts endlessly through the Sea of Sand, home to about 500 people who know nothing about the outside world.

The Marked are those who can wield thymia, a psychic power fueled by emotion. They die young, around the age of 30. Those who have no thymia are called the Unmarked.

Chakuro, the Mud Whale archivist, meets Lykos one day on an abandoned island-ship found floating near theirs. It's the first time he has met someone from the outside world, but Lykos doesn't share his excitement. As an apátheia, a soldier stripped of emotions, she is as cold as a doll.

After spending time with Chakuro and the others on the Mud Whale, Lykos begins to recover some of her emotions. She warns the Committee of Elders to flee, but it is too late and the Mud Whale is suddenly attacked by soldiers in harlequin masks.

The Mud Whale is instantly transformed from a paradise to a battleground, and many held dear are slain. All Chakuro can do is despair.

"The Mud Whale was our entire world."

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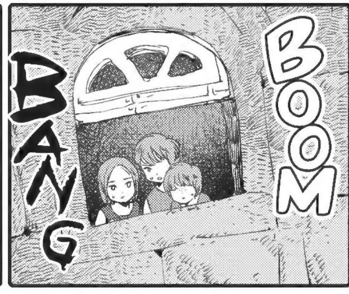


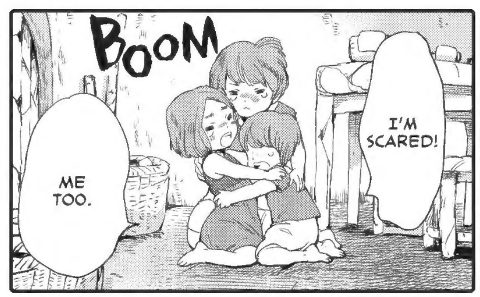

Chapter 5
Behind the Eyelids

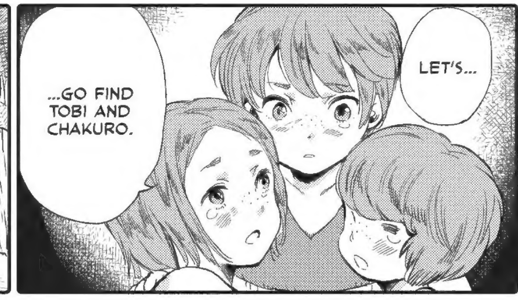

IT IS VITAL THAT WE DOCUMENT THE EXTERMINATION...
...OF THE FÁLAINA PRISONERS.
THE HERETICS' TRAGIC END...
...WILL SHOW NOT JUST OUR OWN COUNTRY...

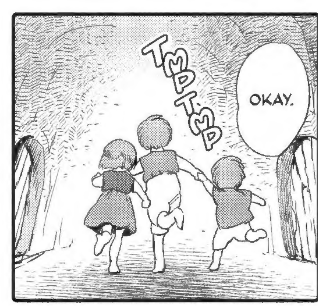

...BUT THE ENTIRE WORLD THE PATH THAT MUST BE FOLLOWED.
RECORD EVERYTHING.


BANG
BANG

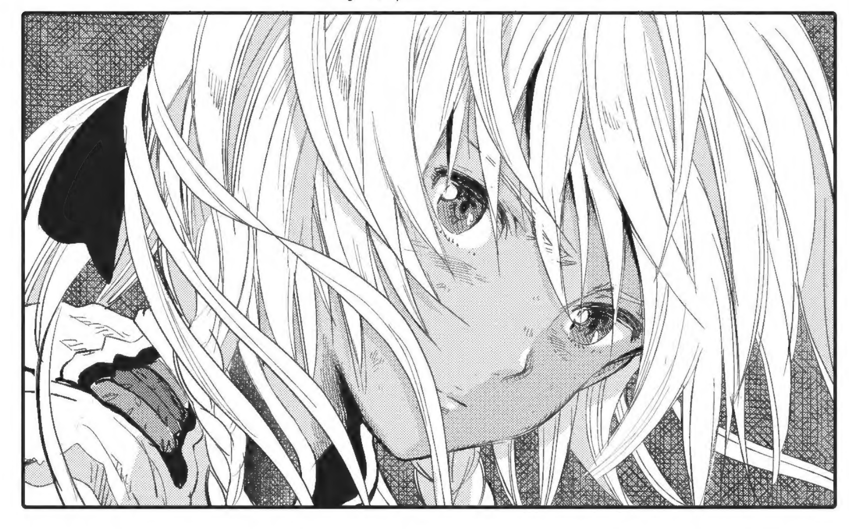

BOOM
BANG


BOOM
I'M SCARED!
ME TOO.


LET'S...
...GO FIND TOBI AND CHAKURO.


OKAY.
TMPTMP


BOOM

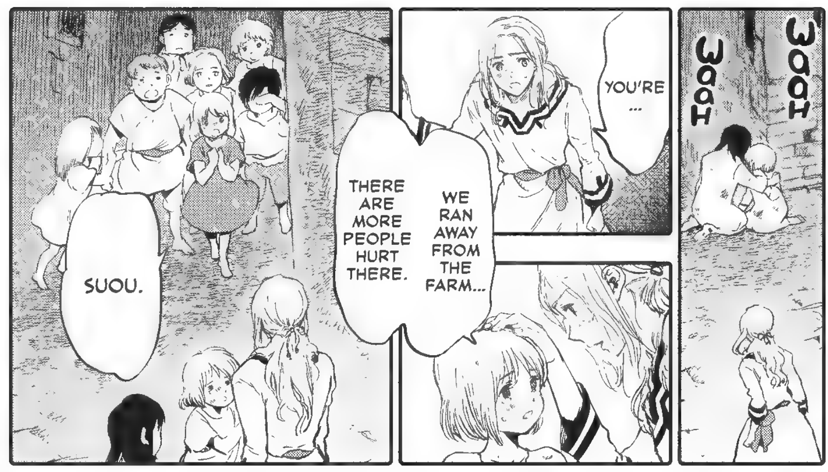



DASH
LYKOS, DON'T...
WAIT!
BOOOM
I MUST FIGHT.
EVEN IF IT MEANS...
...BETRAYING HIM.


FÁLAINA... THE PEOPLE OF THE MUD WHALE...
...AREN'T THE VICIOUS SAVAGES...
...WE WERE BROUGHT UP TO BELIEVE.
I JUST MET THEM, AND THEIR WORLD IS UNFAMILIAR TO ME...
...BUT STILL, IT MAKES ME NOSTALGIC.

THIS SHIP HAS SOMETHING WE'VE LOST...

WE CAN'T DESTROY IT.

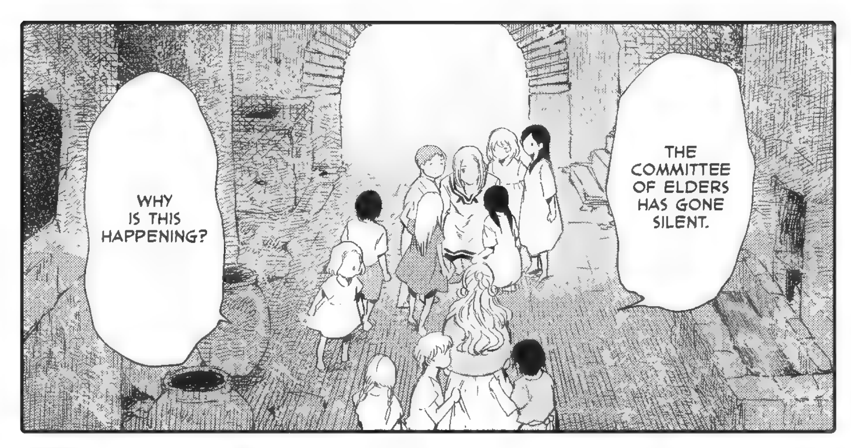


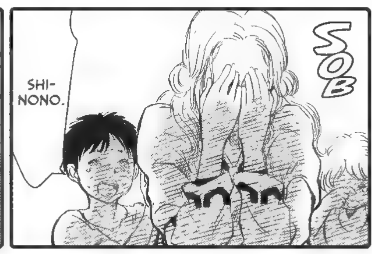

SUOU!
EVERY-ONE...

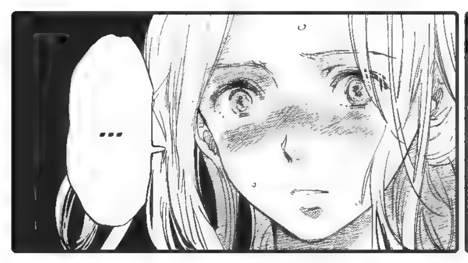

SUOU ...


CALM YOURSELF AND LISTEN.
IT'S ABOUT TAISHA.

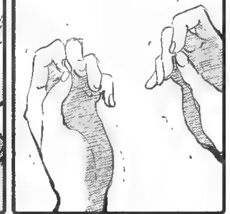

SHE'S DEAD.
THE VIGILANTES ON GUARD TRIED TO GET HER TO THE INFIRMARY, BUT...IT WAS TOO LATE.


THE COMMITTEE OF ELDERS HAS GONE SILENT.
WHY IS THIS HAPPENING?

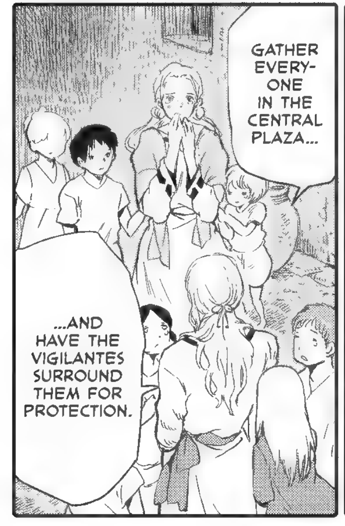

SOB
SHI-NONO.


...


TRMBL




CLENCH

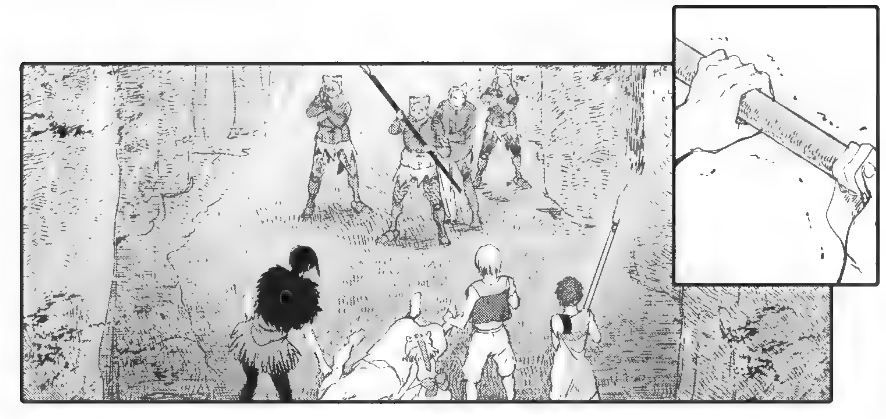

GATHER EVERY-ONE IN THE CENTRAL PLAZA...
...AND HAVE THE VIGILANTES SURROUND THEM FOR PROTECTION.

THEY ARE HUMAN, AREN'T THEY?

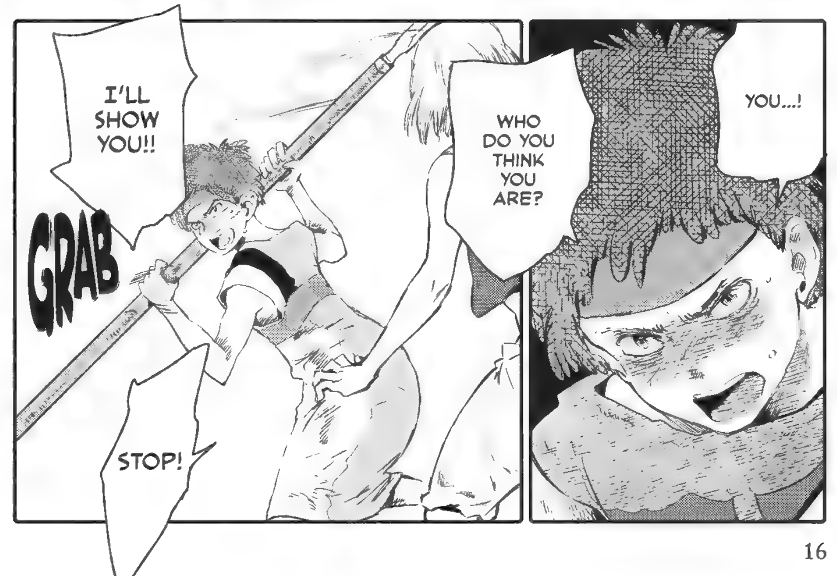
THIS ATROCITY CAN'T BE TOLERATED.

IF THE COMMITTEE OF ELDERS WON'T ACT...








YOU...!
WHO DO YOU THINK YOU ARE?
I'LL SHOW YOU!!
GRAB
STOP!


SHH
CLANG
AIJIRO ...!
STAGGER
THUD
NK



THEY'RE DEMONS...

THERE'S SOMETHING WRONG WITH THEM!

...YOU'VE GOT TO BE KIDDING ME!

SHOVE

...

DON'T COME ANY CLOSER!

!

SHAKE

SHAKE

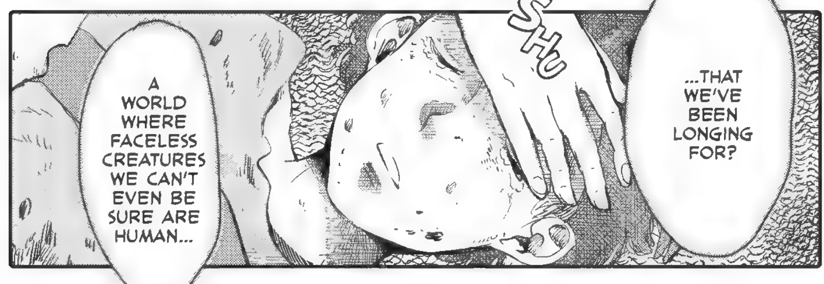
Y- YOU...

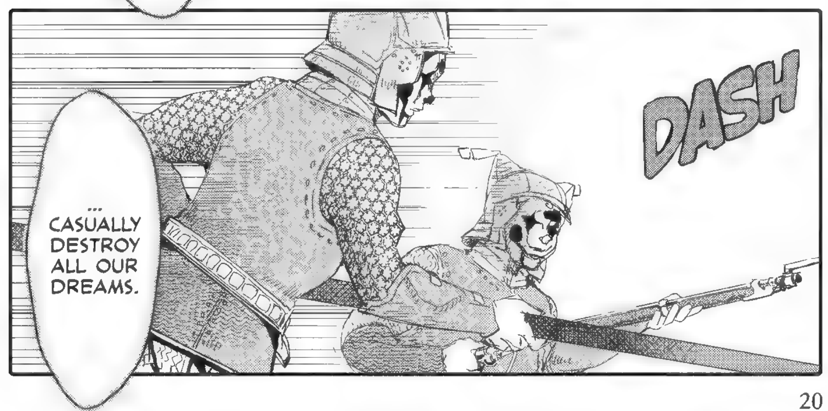
NIBI.


OUNI!
WAAAAH!
OUNI ...
OUNI !!


IS THIS IT?


THIS IS THE WORLD BEYOND THE SEA...


...THAT WE'VE BEEN LONGING FOR?
SHU
A WORLD WHERE FACELESS CREATURES WE CAN'T EVEN BE SURE ARE HUMAN...


DASH
...CASUALLY DESTROY ALL OUR DREAMS.


OUNI !!
SHP
MY EYES ARE OPEN NOW.
POOF
IT DOESN'T MATTER.
I DON'T EVEN CARE ANYMORE.
SH
M


SHINONO, LADIES...
...PLEASE SEE TO THIS.
SUOU, WE'LL PROTECT YOU!
I'M GINSHU, FROM THE VIGILANTE CORPS.
THE VIGILANTE CORPS PROTECTS THE PEACE ON THE MUD WHALE.
HEY ...
ARE *YOU* GOING TO FIGHT TOO?!
IF THEY COME FOR US, WE GO FOR THEM!
THOK
THOK


DON'T KILL THEM.
IF WE RETURN VIOLENCE WITH VIOLENCE, IT WILL NEVER END.
THERE'S NO REASON FOR THE OUTSIDE WORLD TO ATTACK US...
I'M SURE THIS IS JUST A MISUNDER-STANDING.
I'LL CLARIFY THE SITUATION WITH THEM.
I CAN'T BELIEVE TAISHA IS DEAD...
...BUT THIS IS WHAT SHE WOULD'VE DONE.
BESIDES, THE MUD WHALE DOESN'T HAVE THE WEAPONS TO DEFEND ITSELF AGAINST AN ATTACK LIKE THIS...
EVEN IF WE FIGHT, WE CAN'T—


PLIP


WHAK
SHK


BANG
BANG
BANG
GYULU

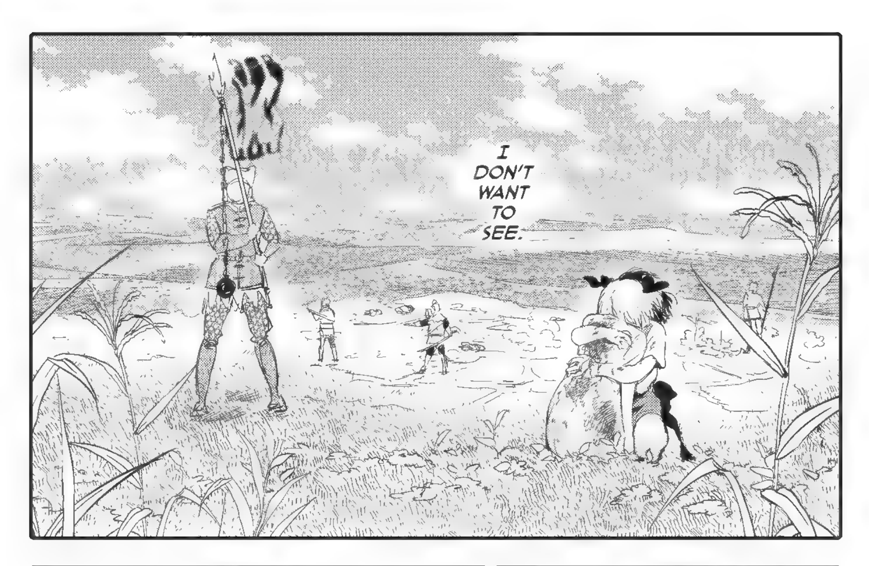

CLANG
THWIK
DASH
BOOSH


SHNK
SHNK
I DON'T CARE...


...ABOUT THIS WORLD ANY-MORE.


GAH!
HE'S A MONSTER.
TAISHA...
STAGGER
WHAT ARE WE DOING?
IS THIS THE ONLY WAY?
ISN'T A WORLD FULL OF DEMONS AND MONSTERS...

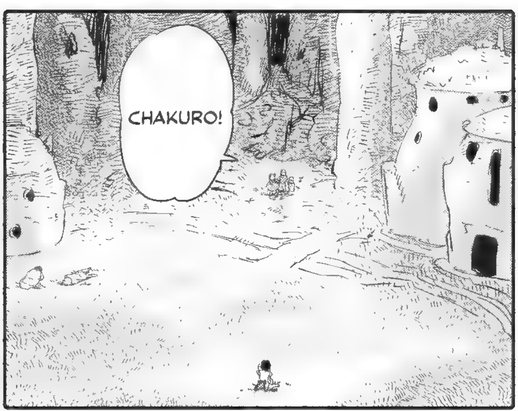
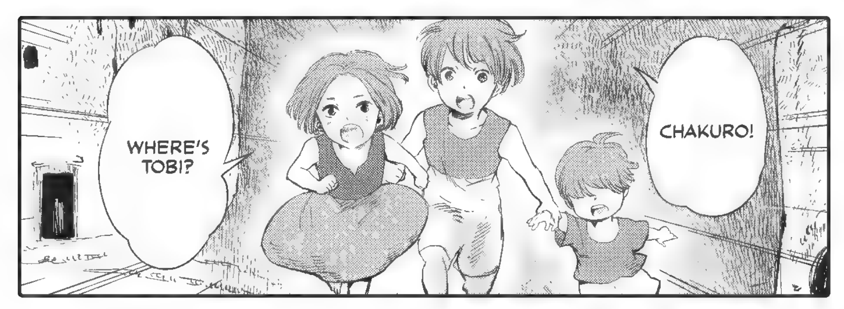

...THE VERY DEFINITION OF HELL?!

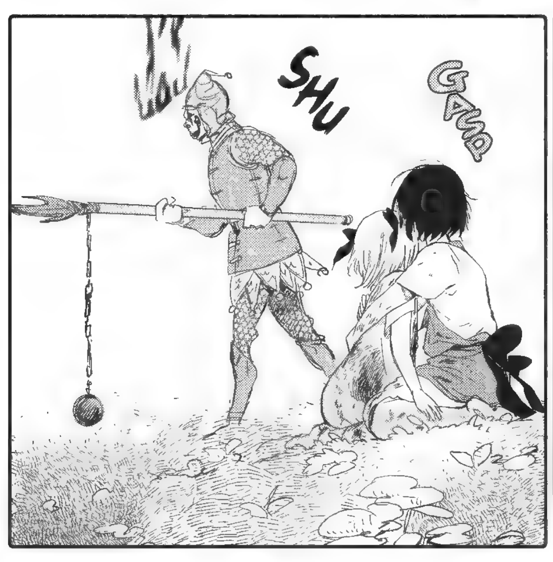

I DON'T WANT TO SEE.


THEN WE WON'T SEE ANYTHING WE DON'T WANT TO, RIGHT?


SAMI...
THAT'S OKAY, RIGHT?


I'LL JUST CLOSE MY EYES WITH YOU.



CHAKURO!

CHAKURO!
WHERE'S TOBI?

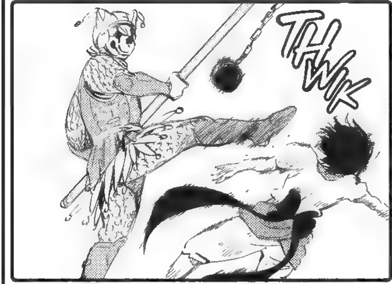
...
THE KIDS...

GAUA
SHU

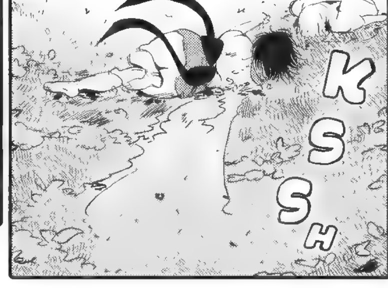

STOP...


WAIT...


SHOOM


DON'T HURT THEM!
PLEA–


THWK


KSSSH

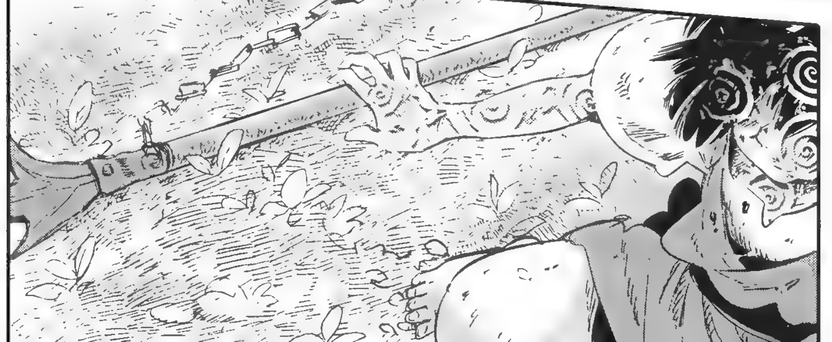




S-STOP...
JUST STOP!
CLANG
MY HANDS AND FEET ARE GETTING COLD.
MY HEAD... HURTS.
SAMI.


WHAT?!
MY BROTHER AND SISTERS ARE DOWN THERE!
DON'T GO DOWN THERE, TOBI— IT'S NOT SAFE.
LET ME GO...
I SAID, LET ME GO!
GASP
CHAKURO.

SHUUU





JANG


THWAK
THUD
DASH
HJUU
UHN!


KAF WUMP

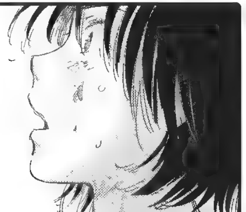


HUFF
HUFF
HE'S ABOUT MY AGE!
HIS SKIN IS THE SAME COLOR AS LYKOS'S.
TOBI!!
YOU IDIOTS!
CHA-KURO.
CHAKURO, RUN FOR IT!

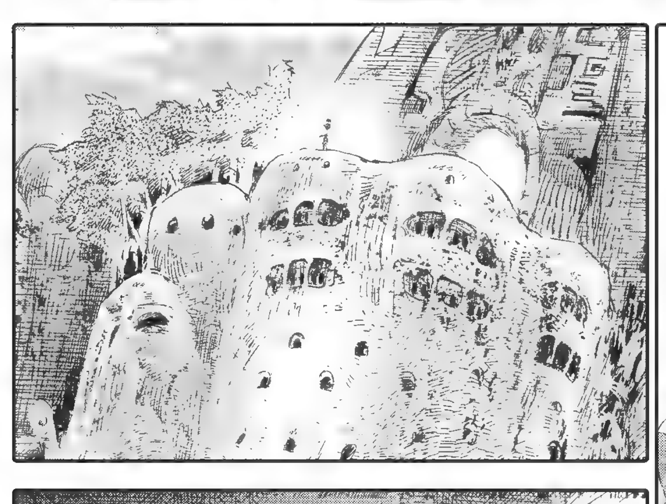

DON'T TOUCH SAMI!


!
SHING
SHING
SHING

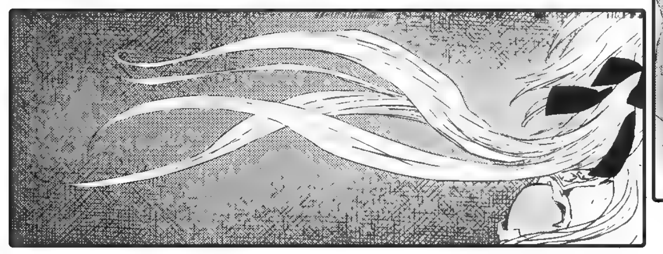

DON'T COME NEAR HER...



GYUU








BANG
BANG
KSH
KSH
STOP.
SHE'S...


YOU...
SHA
YOU'RE HERE...


I HEARD LÝKOS WAS ON ITS WAY TO EXTERMINATE FÁLAINA...
...WHEN IT WAS ATTACKED AND DESTROYED.


...AND ALIVE.


ARE THERE ANY OTHER SURVIVORS?

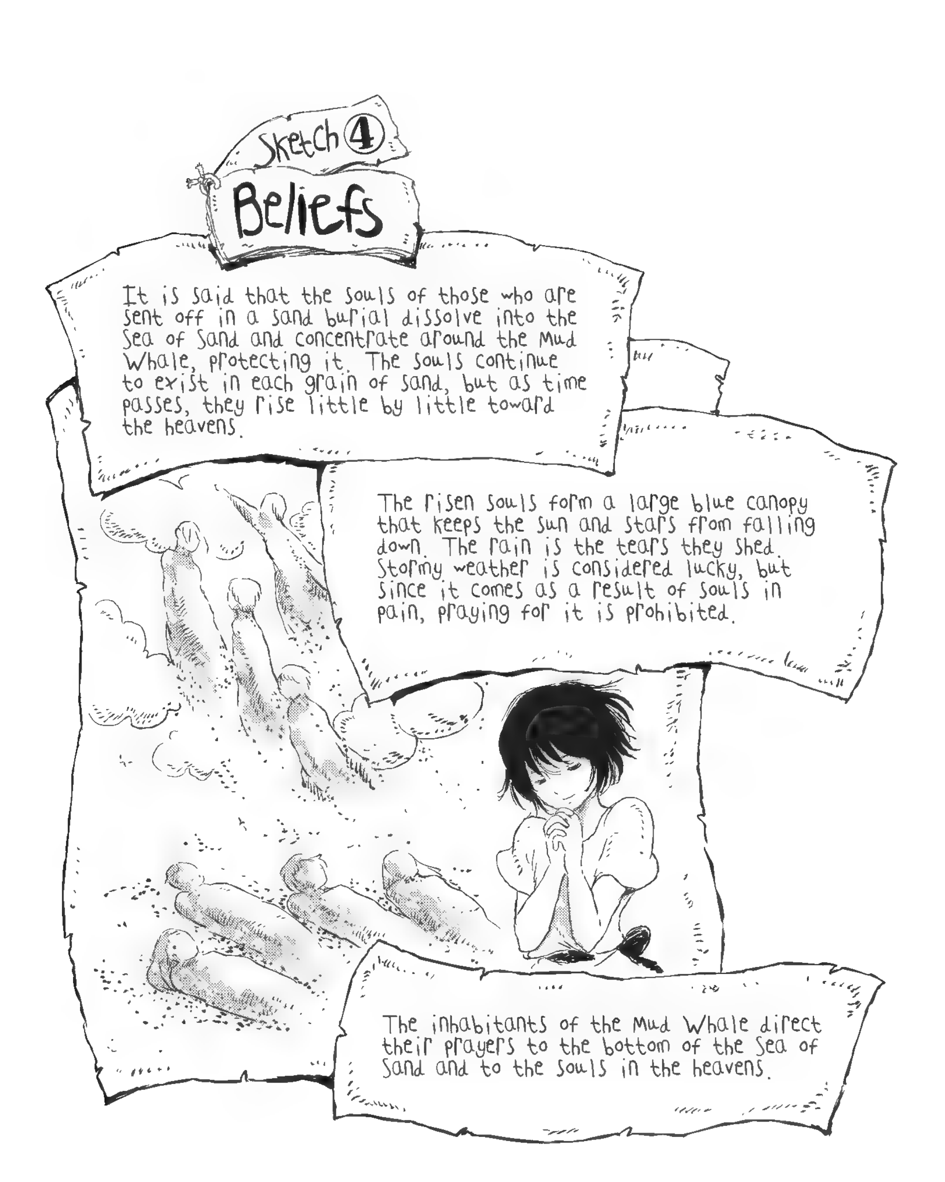

PEEK

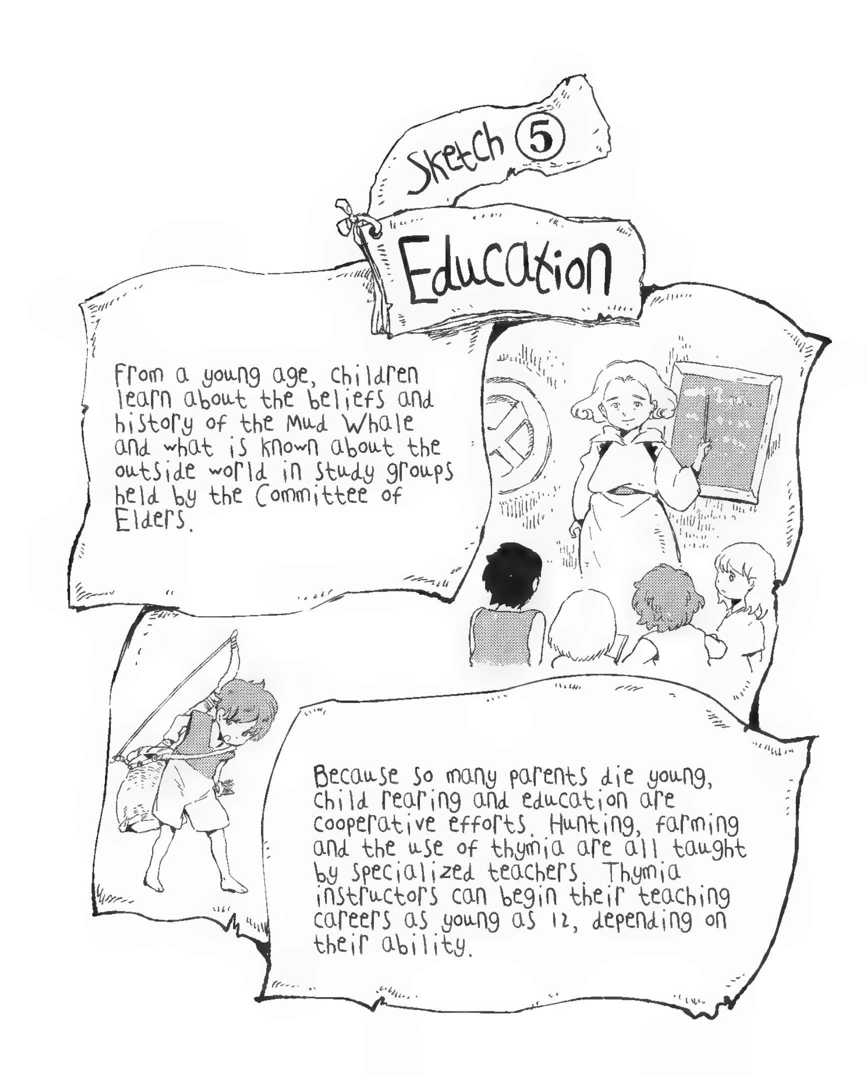

HEY, WHAT DOES THAT MEAN?
SHH!
COME WITH ME...
...BACK TO SKYROS.
LET ME GO.
SHWK
I'M NOT RETURNING WITH YOU.
WHAT ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT?
I...
I'VE ALREADY DECIDED.
HAS BEING AWAY FROM NOUS CONTROL MADE YOU LOSE YOUR MIND?



Behind the Eyelids -The End-

The Archivist's Notes




Sketch 5
Education
From a young age, children learn about the beliefs and history of the Mud Whale and what is known about the outside world in study groups held by the Committee of Elders.
Because so many parents die young, child rearing and education are cooperative efforts. Hunting, farming and the use of thymia are all taught by specialized teachers. Thymia instructors can begin their teaching careers as young as 12, depending on their ability.

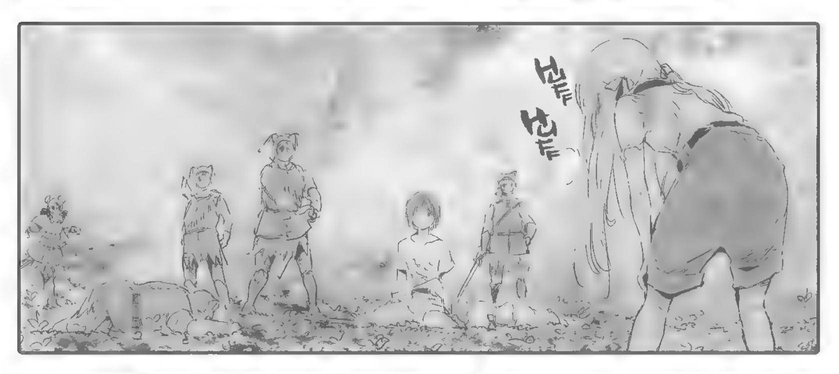

THE SUPREME COMMANDER OF THE OPERATION TO DESTROY FÁLAINA...
...IS YOUR BROTHER.
I HAVE NOTHING TO DO WITH MY BROTHER.
DID...
DID HE LOOK FOR ME?
DID HE TELL OUR PARENTS THAT I MIGHT BE DEAD?
EVEN IF I RETURN...
...I AM NOTHING BUT A DOLL WITHOUT A NAME OR FEELINGS!

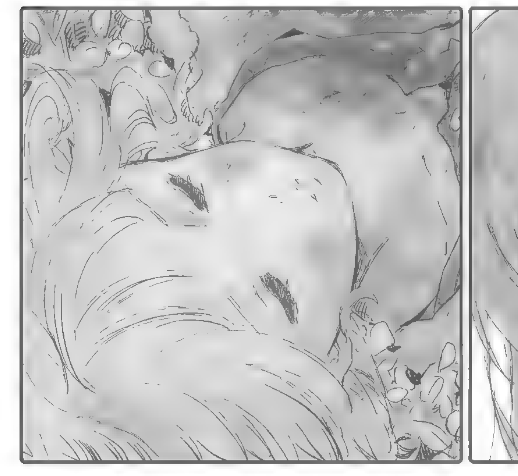

Chapter 6
Liontari Attacks


TMP TMP


DASH
WAIT.


GET A MESSAGE TO THE COMMANDER OF SKYROS.


HUFF HUFF





LYKOS...

WHO...

WHO ARE YOU?

PLEASE ANSWER ME.

HE HAS THE SAME SKIN COLOR AS YOU...

SHF

HEY, HEY...

SHOOOM

THWIK

YOU USELESS LOSER!









YOU'RE ALIVE!

LIONTARI ...

YOU WERE ON SKYROS.

I HEARD THAT LÝKOS WAS DESTROYED.

I WAS WORRIED ABOUT YOU!

DON'T LIE.

YOU DON'T HAVE FEELINGS LIKE THAT.

SHOVE

YOU'RE RIGHT.

POP

I HAVEN'T HAD TIME TO BE WORRIED...

...SINCE I WAS ASSIGNED TO THIS MASSACRE!

IT'S SO EXCITING! HOW CAN I THINK ABOUT ANYTHING ELSE?!

I SEE YOUR APPALLING TASTE HASN'T GOTTEN ANY BETTER.

THAT'S RIGHT!

I THINK THE NOUS AND I ARE COMPLETE-LY INCOM-PATIBLE.

NO MATTER HOW MUCH EMOTION I GIVE IT, THIS IS WHAT I GET.

SO I GOT KICKED OUT OF OFFICER TRAINING, LABELED A TROUBLE-MAKER...

...AND REASSIGNED TO A BUNCH OF DIFFERENT UNITS...

I DON'T THINK I'M EVER GETTING PROMOTED.

SO I'VE DECIDED I'M GOING TO DO WHATEVER I WANT.


KSH
FÁLAINA IS THE ULTIMATE PARADISE.
IT'S FULL OF UNRESISTING PREY.
LOOK...
WE CAN BUTCHER CUTE GIRLS LIKE THIS...
YANK
RUB
...


LUNGE
DON'T TOUCH SAMI...!!
GYAH!
THWA
THUMP
!


GRIK
GRIK
DLIP DLIP
!
HE... HE'S CRYING ...
HE'S CRYING!


GRII GRII
I HARDLY EVER GET TO SEE CRYING.
EVERYONE AROUND ME HAS MESSED WITH THEIR FEELINGS.
I WANT TO MAKE HIM CRY MORE ...
I WANT TO BREAK HIM...
KILL...
GYUU
LIONTARI ...
I WON'T LET YOU HURT HIM...
32...
STAGGER
WHY ARE YOU GETTING IN MY WAY?
DOES THIS MEAN I CAN KILL YOU TOO?

BWOOOO

!

BWOO

WOOOH

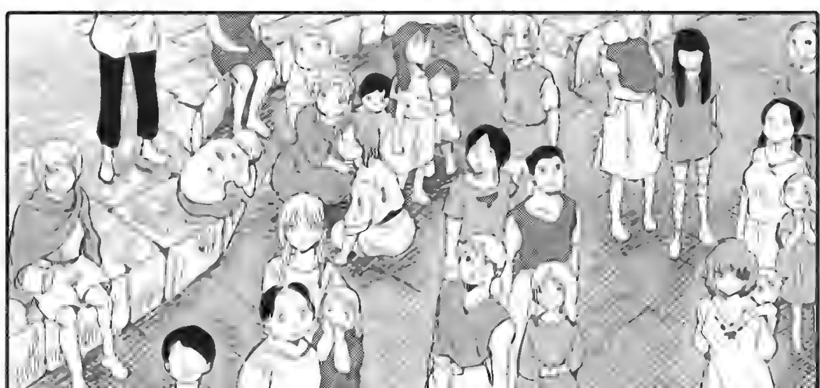
SKYROS!

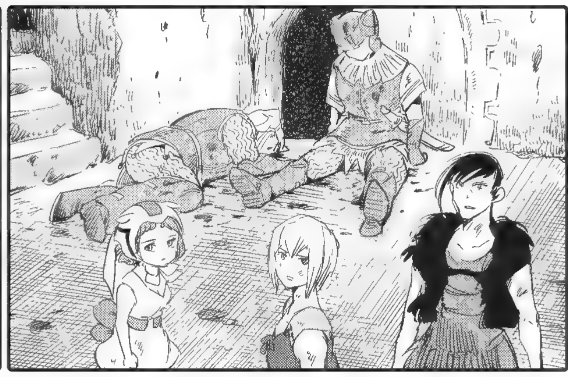
THE NOUS LÝKOS HAS BEEN SECURED.

TROMP

TROMP

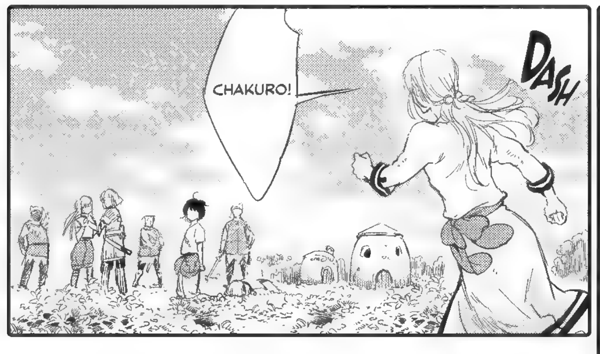
SOLDIERS ON FÁLAINA, RETURN.



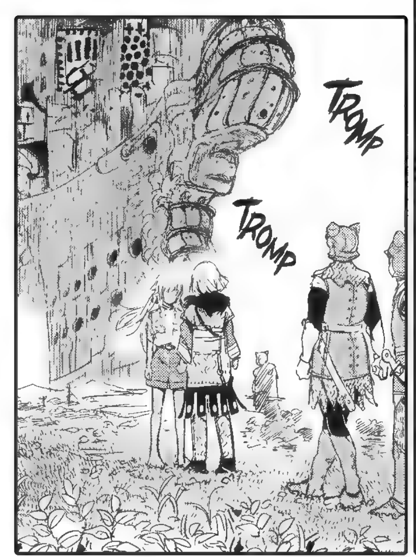




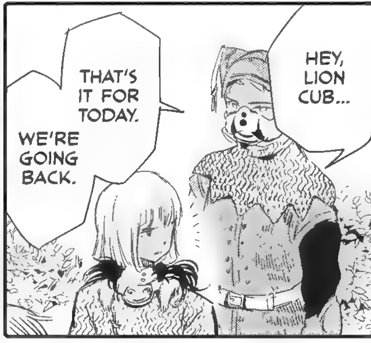

SUOU ...
THEY'RE LEAVING.
OH!


DASH
CHAKURO!




TROMP
TROMP


ISN'T THAT YOUR SISTER?


HEY, LION CUB...
THAT'S IT FOR TODAY.
WE'RE GOING BACK.


NO!
I'M NOT GOING BACK!
WHAT?

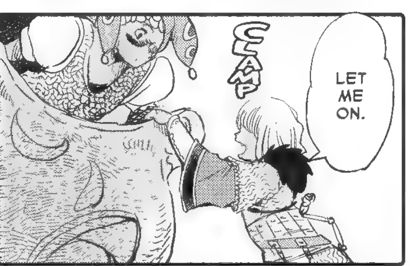

GRAB
HEY, WHAT ARE WE GOING TO DO WITH THIS ONE?
WE'RE BRING-ING HER BACK, RIGHT?

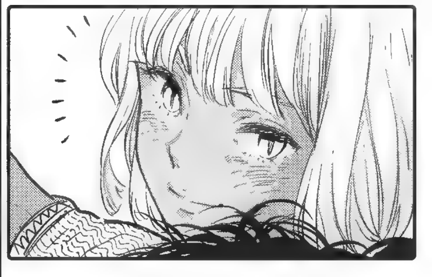

YOU CAN'T DO THAT.
WHAT ARE YOU GOING TO DO ON FÁLAINA?
YOU KNOW EVERYONE HERE IS GOING TO DIE, RIGHT?
YANK
LET ME GO!!
OH!
You silly ones down there! ♪
THOOM
THOOM
THOOM
THOOM
I have a message, a message!
IT'S COM-MANDER ORCA'S JESTER.
MY BROTHER'S ...


Leave 32 on Fālaina.
THOOM
"My sister will be the subject of an experiment regarding how exposure to Fālaina affects the body."
He says we're to call you Skyros Sample 4 from now on.
THOOM
Wha—
THAT'S COLD ...!
AH HA HA!
WHAT A THING TO DO TO THE SISTER YOU THOUGHT WAS DEAD!

HEY, SAMPLE 4!

YOUR BROTHER'S ABANDONED YOU!







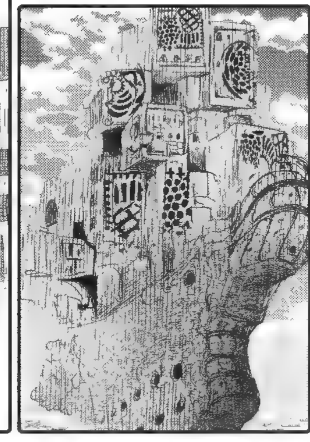


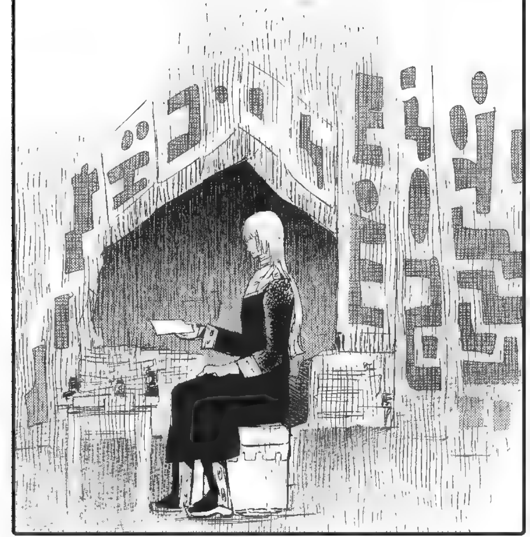

I'LL BE BACK, SAMPLE 4!
I'LL COME SEE HOW UNHINGED FÁLAINA MAKES YOU!
GYUU
YOUR UNIFORM HAS LYKOS EMBROIDERED ON IT.
YOU HAVE A NAME...

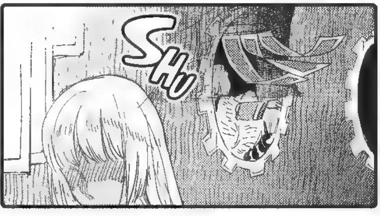
ZSSSH

MY BROTHER.





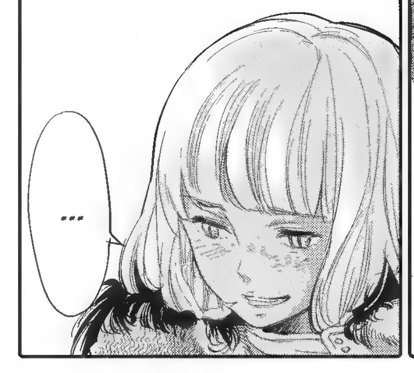


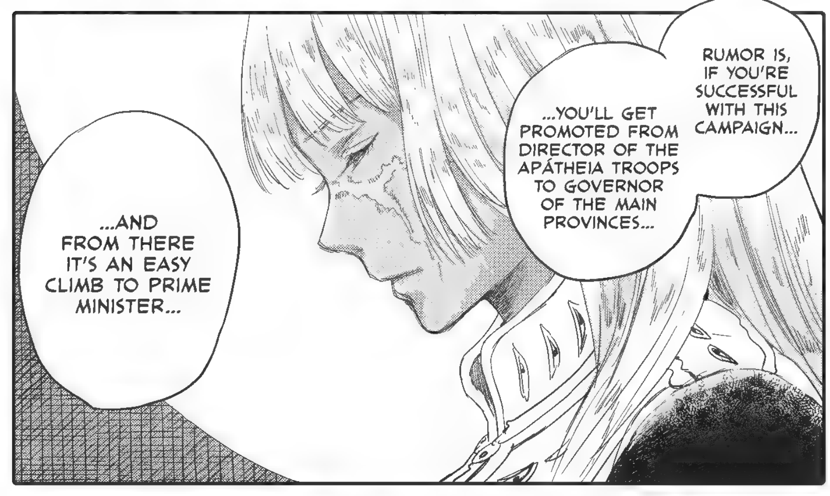
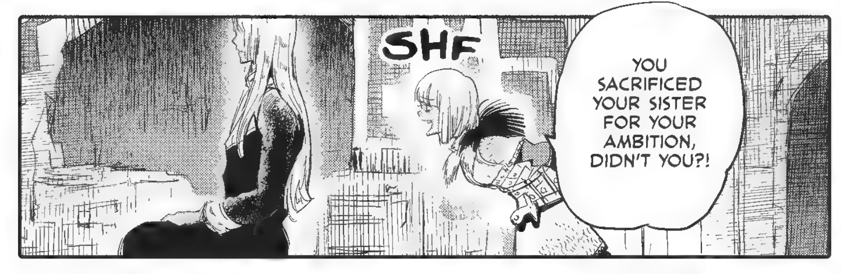
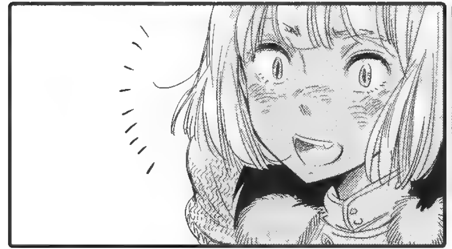

SHU


COM-MANDER ORCA...
DO YOU REMEMBER ME?


I SPENT MY CHILD-HOOD IN THE SAME TOWN AS YOU.
I'M A FRIEND OF YOUR SISTER'S.


HOW CAN YOU DO SOMETHING LIKE THAT?
TURNING YOUR OWN SISTER INTO AN EXPERI-MENT...
THAT'S TOO COLD.


...


RUMOR IS, IF YOU'RE SUCCESSFUL WITH THIS CAMPAIGN...
...YOU'LL GET PROMOTED FROM DIRECTOR OF THE APÁTHEIA TROOPS TO GOVERNOR OF THE MAIN PROVINCES...
...AND FROM THERE IT'S AN EASY CLIMB TO PRIME MINISTER...

YOU SACRIFICED YOUR SISTER FOR YOUR AMBITION, DIDN'T YOU?!
SHF


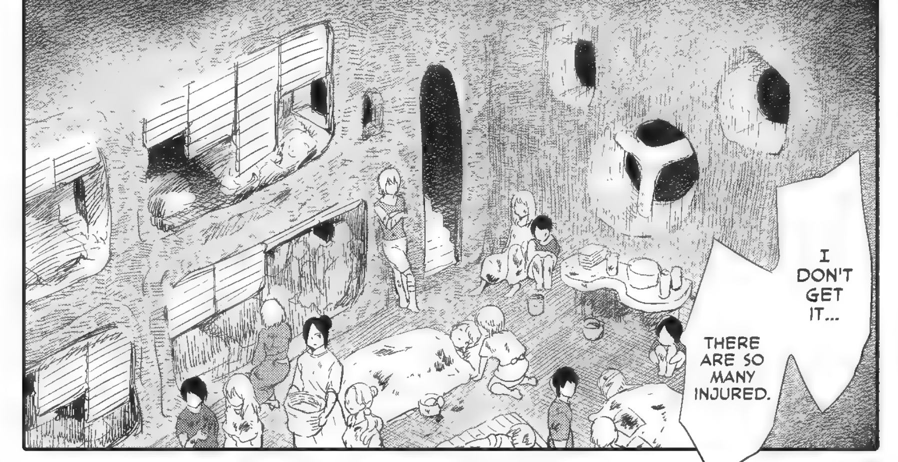
CLACK

I HAVE NO WISH TO RULE THE COUNTRY.

MY AMBITIONS LIE ELSE-WHERE.




I would write about this day, but only much later.
The harlequin mob arrived suddenly, and just as suddenly, departed.
The citizens of the Mud Whale, whose peaceful, unchanging lives had been snatched away...
...greeted the night with confusion and sorrow.


I DON'T GET IT...
THERE ARE SO MANY INJURED.


AND MORE HAVE DIED!


WHY ISN'T THERE ANY DIRECTION FROM THE COMMIT-TEE OF ELDERS?
WHAT'S GOING ON?
DON'T TAKE IT OUT ON *US*.


TMP
OH, GOTTA GET TO MY POST.

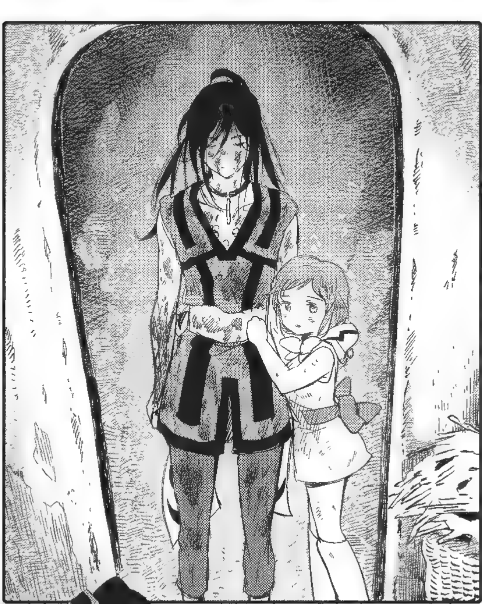

CRAP!

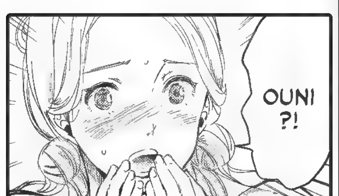

HUSTLE
WE NEED MORE WATER IN THE INFIRMARY.
HURRY UP!
HMM?

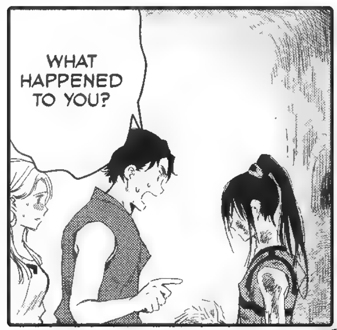

HUP
HEY.
IT'S KUCHIBA...
I HEARD YOU WERE WITH MAYOR TAISHA, SO I WAS WORRIED...
COUGH
WELL, NOT REALLY ...
ARE YOU OKAY?
HOW CAN I BE OKAY?
WHY DID IT HAVE TO BE MAYOR TAISHA?!
IT SHOULD HAVE BEEN ME INSTEAD!
...
SOMEONE PLEASE TURN BACK TIME!
FWSH
QUIT YOUR CRYING!



YOU CAN'T TURN BACK TIME!
YOU SURVIVED.
PULL YOURSELF TOGETHER!!
SOB!
LEAVE HIM ALONE, MASOH.
IT WILL AFFECT HIS RE- COVERY.
I...
...I'M SORRY.
I WASN'T SURE WHAT TO DO.
NEITHER AM I...
NONE OF US ARE.
SHP
OH!




OUNI ?!


WHAT HAPPENED TO YOU?


GIVE ME SOME MEDI-CINE.
ARE YOU... HURT?


THE MEDI-CINE IS FOR MY FRIENDS.


...
SEVEN DAYS.
HUH?


THEY'LL BE BACK AGAIN IN SEVEN DAYS.


THIS TIME THEIR MAIN OBJECTIVE WAS TO RECOVER THAT OTHER SHIP...
THE REAL ATTACK COMES NEXT.


HOW DO YOU KNOW THAT?


I MADE THEM TALK.


I KILLED SOME OF THEM...
MY FRIENDS HAVE RESTRAINED TWO OTHERS.
SO YOU CAPTURED THEM AND MADE THEM TALK?
ARE THE GUYS WITH THE MASKS REGULAR PEOPLE?
ONE OF THEM IS A WOMAN. THEY'RE BOTH ABOUT OUR AGE.
!!


SLAP
WHY DID YOU HIT HIM?
I WON'T ALLOW IT!
I CAN'T BELIEVE YOU TORTURED THEM. WHAT KIND OF–
HE GOT THEM TO TALK FOR EVERYONE'S SAKE!
THEY KILLED BUKI AND AIJIRO...
IF WE'D LET THEM GO, THEY WOULD'VE GOTTEN SOMEONE ELSE.
OUNI ISN'T WRONG!!
HE'S DONE ALL THE DIRTY WORK.
ENOUGH!!



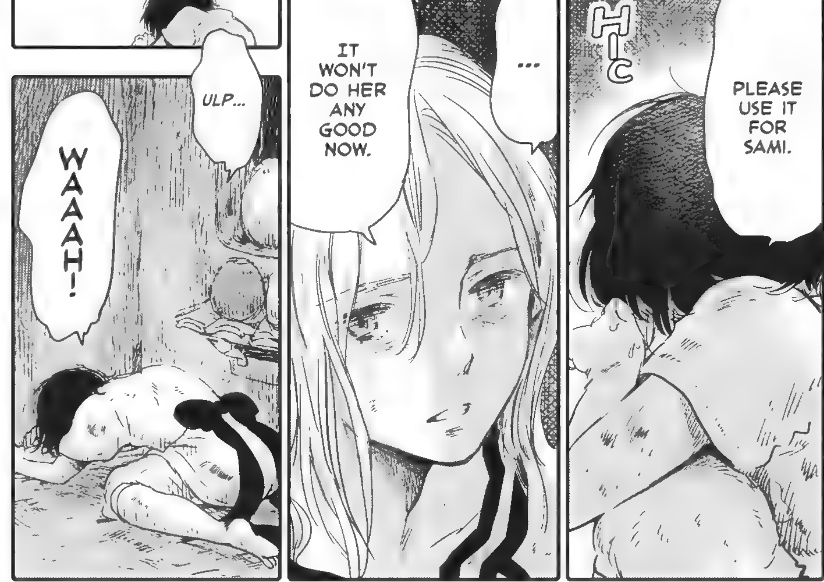
I ONLY TRUST MY FRIENDS.

GRK GRK

HIC HIC

CHAKURO, COME HERE.

I'LL PUT SOME SALVE ON YOU.




I'VE ALWAYS WANTED TO FIND A CURE FOR THE SHORT LIVES THE MARKED LEAD.
I COULDN'T STAND THAT SAMI AND EVERYONE ELSE WOULD BE GONE BEFORE ME.
I HAVE NO WORDS.
CLENCH
I'M SORRY...
...I COULDN'T... PROTECT SAMI.


He gave me one of Sami's hair ribbons.
We decided we would each keep one.
It was harder for me that Suou didn't even shed a tear.
That evening, I tried to remember the days I'd spent with Sami...
...but instead I kept seeing the unsettling eyes of that boy, Liontari...
...and I threw up again and again in the corner of the infirmary.

The funeral took place the very next day.

It was the first time we had sent off so many people.

It's forbidden to cry at funerals, but none of us could manage to abide by that rule.

Even Kuchiba, who was usually the strictest about it, cried the whole time...

No one called him on it.


It was a clear day...
...and the sand burial was beautiful.
GOOD-BYE...
If the world is filled with so much sadness...
...SAMI.
...then my life should end right now...


...with this scene playing behind my eyelids.


WAAH! WAAH!
SOB
WHY CAN'T WE SEE MAYOR TAISHA ANYMORE?
IT CAN'T BE HELPED.
HEY.

THE COMMITTEE OF ELDERS FINALLY MADE A MOVE.

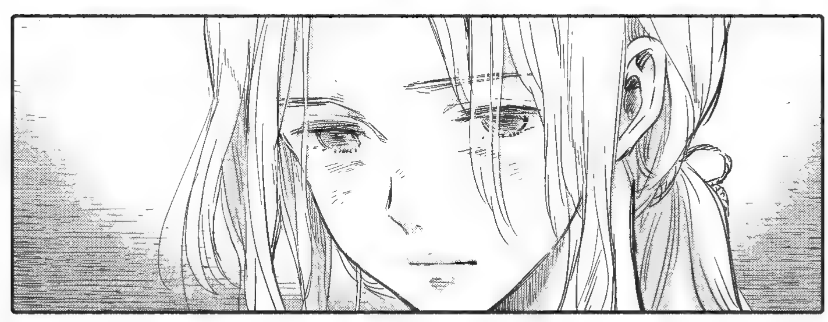
SUOU'S BEEN SUMMONED.

...

SUOU...

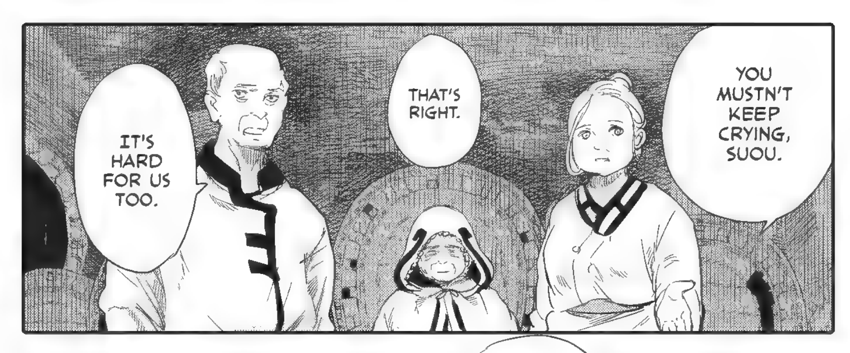
...WE APPOINT YOU THE NEW MAYOR OF THE MUD WHALE.

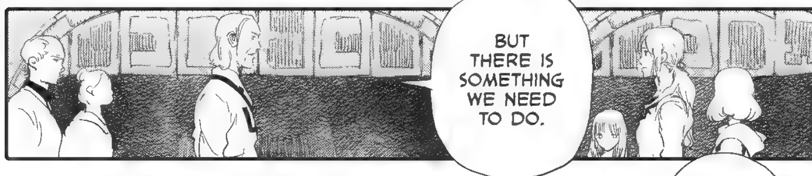

...
I HUMBLY ...
...ACCEPT THE HONOR.



YOU LOOK AWFUL.
WASH YOUR TUNIC.
YOU'LL UPSET PEOPLE.
IF IT DOESN'T COME CLEAN...
...WE'LL GET YOU A NEW ONE, SO JUST SEND A REQUISITION.
...
THIS ISN'T DIRT.
THIS IS SAMI'S...


...
SOB...
SOB SOB...
THERE, THERE...
WE FORGET YOU'RE STILL A CHILD.
SUOU.
...
SORRY, NERI.


YOU MUSTN'T KEEP CRYING, SUOU.
THAT'S RIGHT.
IT'S HARD FOR US TOO.


BUT THERE IS SOMETHING WE NEED TO DO.


WE MUST GIVE YOU YOUR FIRST...
...AND LAST MISSION AS MAYOR.


...
WHAT?


THIS IS SOMETHING THE COMMITTEE OF ELDERS HAS JUST NOW UNANIMOUSLY AGREED ON.

WE'RE GOING TO SINK...

...THE MUD WHALE INTO THE SEA OF SAND.



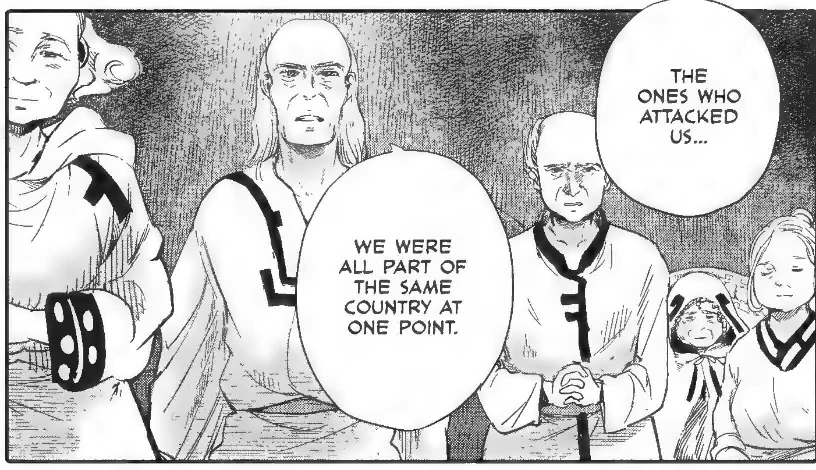


Liontari Attacks -The End-

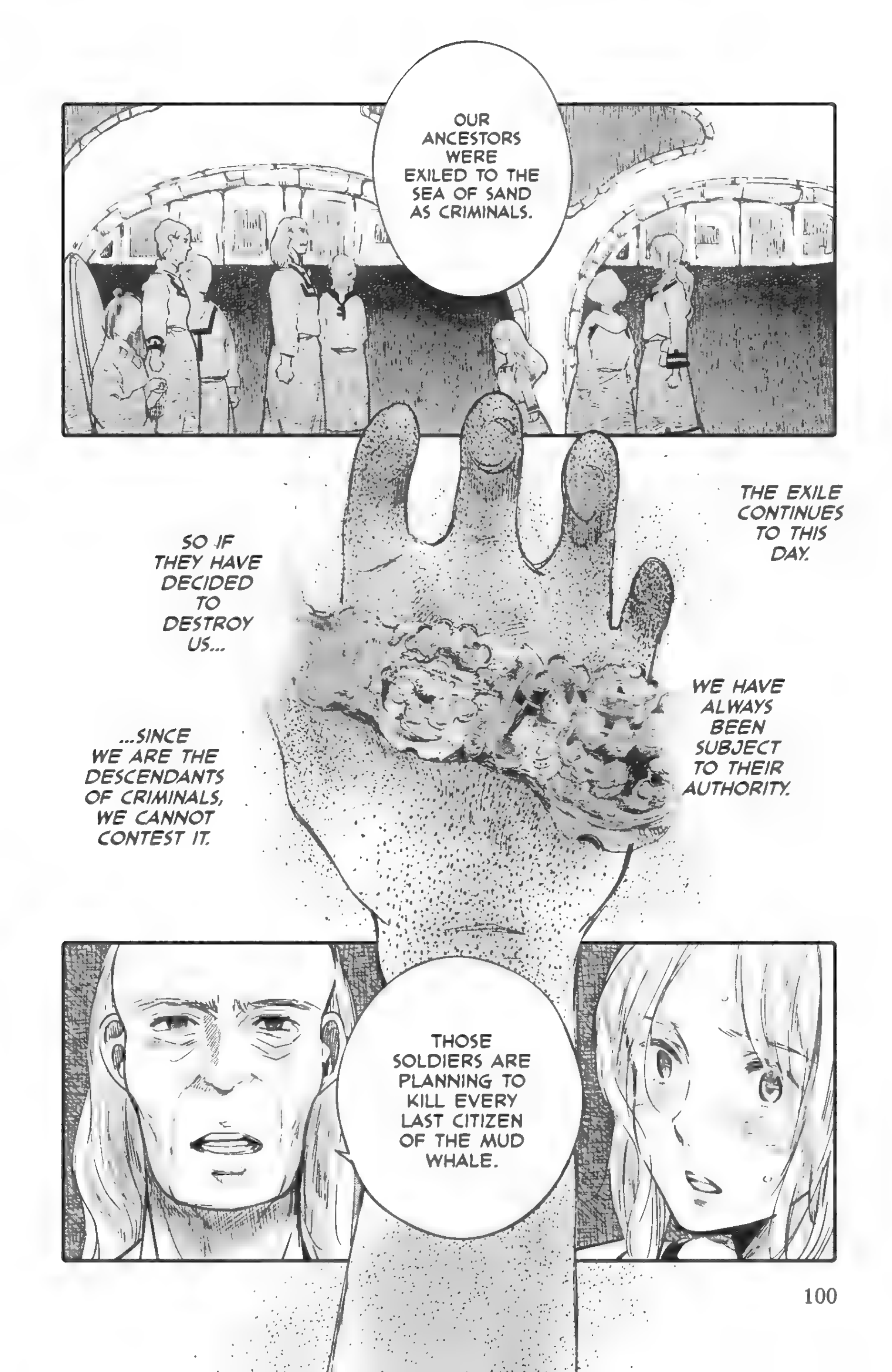

Chapter 7
This World
Is Beautiful
Because...


WE'RE GOING TO SINK...
...THE MUD WHALE INTO THE SEA OF SAND.
WHOOOO
AS THE FINAL MAYOR...
...WE WANT YOU TO GUIDE EVERYONE TO A DIGNIFIED DEATH.
BUT...
WHY DO THAT?
WHY DO WE NEED TO SINK THE MUD WHALE?


WHY DOES EVERYONE HAVE TO DIE?!


THE ONES WHO ATTACKED US...
WE WERE ALL PART OF THE SAME COUNTRY AT ONE POINT.


WHAT ...?


OUR ANCESTORS WERE EXILED TO THE SEA OF SAND AS CRIMINALS.
THE EXILE CONTINUES TO THIS DAY.
SO IF THEY HAVE DECIDED TO DESTROY US...
WE HAVE ALWAYS BEEN SUBJECT TO THEIR AUTHORITY.
...SINCE WE ARE THE DESCENDANTS OF CRIMINALS, WE CANNOT CONTEST IT.
THOSE SOLDIERS ARE PLANNING TO KILL EVERY LAST CITIZEN OF THE MUD WHALE.



WE HAVE BEEN ALONE ON THE SEA OF SAND FOR 93 YEARS. THERE IS NO ONE FOR US TO TURN TO.

WHEN THEY ATTACK AGAIN, THERE IS NO WAY TO AVOID A COMPLETE MASSACRE.

NONE OF US WANT TO SEE THE CITIZENS OF THE MUD WHALE CRUELLY SLAUGHTERED...

...SO IN ORDER TO PRESERVE OUR DIGNITY...

...WE WILL SET OFF TOGETHER, PEACEFULLY, BEFORE WE ARE SLAIN.

CREAK


THE ELDEST.
OH!
FATHER ...
OHH ...
...OH...
OH...
I DON'T WANT TO...
I DON'T WANT TO BE KILLED...
...BUT I DON'T WANT TO DROWN EITHER.

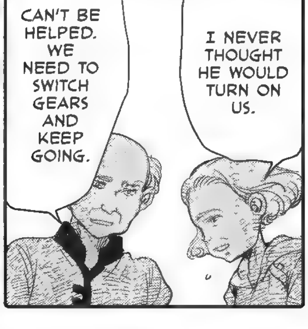

HE LOST HIMSELF A WHILE AGO.
TAKE THE ELDEST TO HIS ROOM.
ELDEST ...
IT WILL BE FINE... IT'S OKAY.
THERE WILL BE NO MORE SENSELESS DEATHS LIKE SAMI'S OR MAYOR TAISHA'S...
SUOU?
I DON'T WANT ANYONE ELSE TO DIE!
THERE MUST BE A WAY FOR US ALL TO SURVIVE!


THAT'S RIGHT.
FATHER...
...YOU MUST ASK FÁLAINA.
FÁLAINA KNOWS ALL.
FÁLAINA ...?
THAT'S WHAT THE GIRL FROM THE ISLAND SAID...
IS THAT THE MUD WHALE?
STOP IT, NOW.
YOU DON'T NEED TO KNOW THIS.
...
ELDEST, WHAT IS IT?
WHAT IS FÁLAINA?
KSH
KSH

TH NK

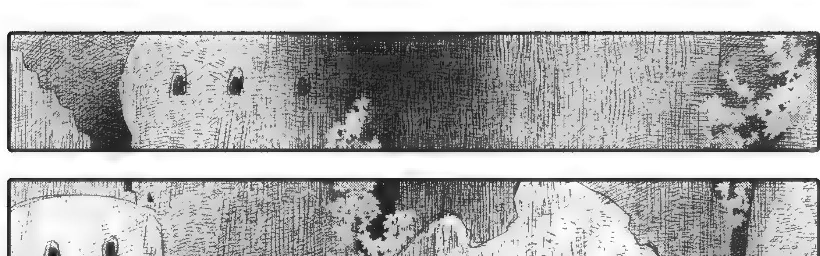


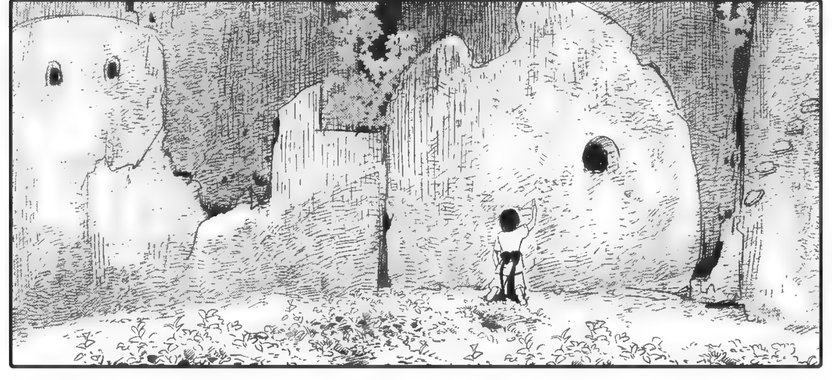
IN AN EVENT LIKE THIS, WE'RE SUPPOSED TO...
GRIN
...DETAIN HIM.
ISN'T THAT RIGHT?
YES, DO THAT.
AND, COMMANDER... ...INCREASE THE GUARDS IN THE BELLY.
SHWIP





NERI.







SKRTCH
SKRTCH
I'm in the grip of the most severe episode of hypergraphia...
...I've ever experienced.
The sentences I scratch into the dirt wall make no sense.
KRTCH
KRTCH
HUH?
I wonder if I've lost my mind.


WHAT ARE YOU WRITING?


WAIT, WHAT?
DON'T LOOK.


DON'T WORRY.
I CAN'T READ.


IF YOU DON'T WANT PEOPLE TO SEE, DON'T SCRIBBLE IT HERE.
DOMP


CLAMBER
CLAMBER
SO...
I HEARD FROM TOBI...
YOU TOOK OUT THE INVADERS WITH THYMIA?!


YOU AND OUNI WERE THE ONLY ONES WHO COULD STAND UP TO THEM.
NOT BAD, FOR A DESTROYER.
YOU'RE COOL.
STOP ...
STOP IT.
...
I COULDN'T DO ANYTHING.
THAT'S WHY SAMI DIED.







THAT'S YOUR VICTORY.

TMP

YOU NEED TO HAVE SOME CONFI-DENCE IN YOUR-SELF.


I CAN'T BE CAREFREE LIKE YOU, GINSHU.
THAT'S "MISS GINSHU" ...
... NOT "YOU"!
YOINK
...


WHAT DOES IT MATTER WHAT I CALL YOU?


It matters!

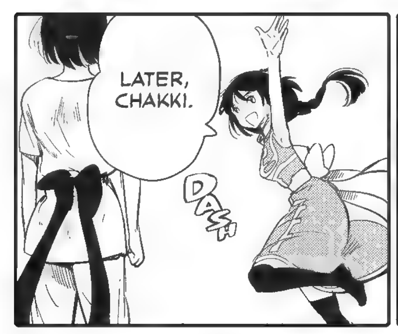

I'M GONNA SHOW YOU HOW TO USE YOUR THYMIA...
...TO FIGHT THEM WHEN THEY COME BACK.
SO "MISS" IS A SIGN OF RESPECT.


WHAT YOU CALL PEOPLE IS IMPORTANT.
IT SHOWS HOW YOU FEEL ABOUT THEM.


GLARE
SO TRY IT AGAIN.

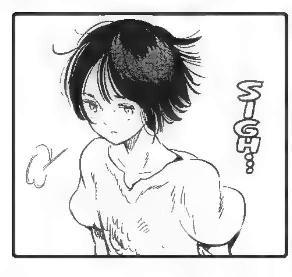

MISS ...
... GINSHU.
Very good.
Nice to meet you, Chakki.

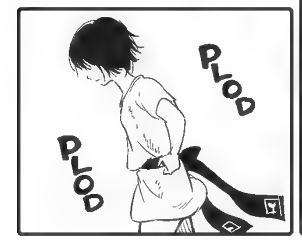

IT'S CHAKURO, NOT CHAKKI.
THAT DOESN'T MATTER.
?!


LATER, CHAKKI.
DASH

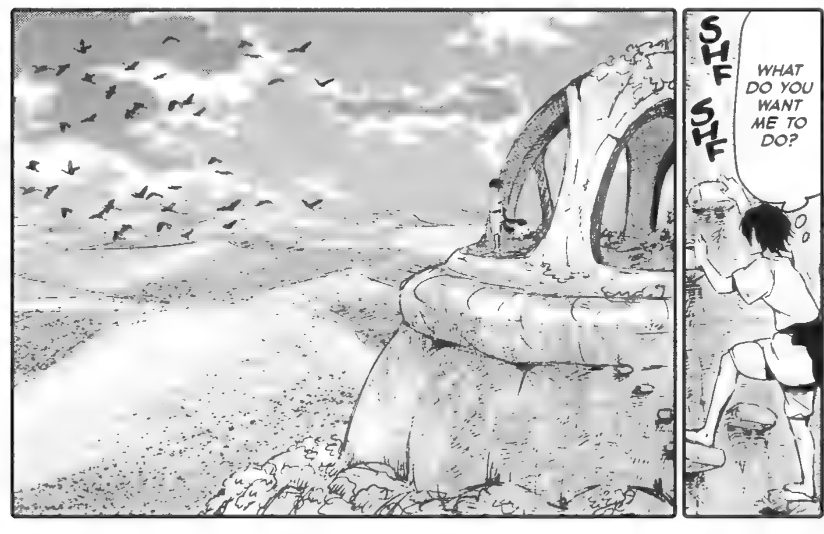

IT'S CHA-KURO!

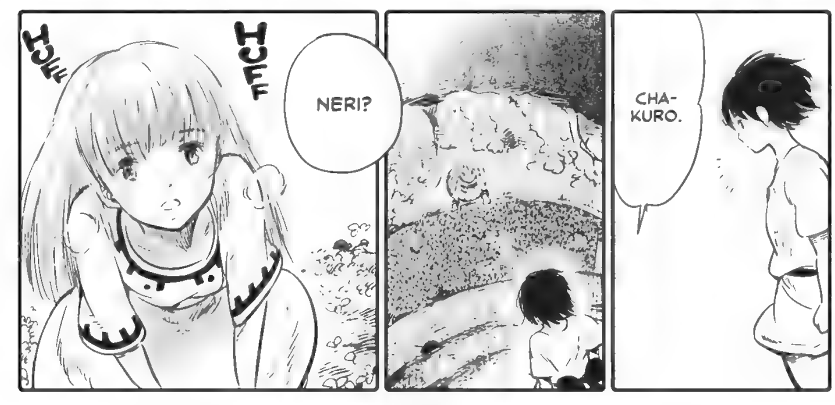

WHO WAS THAT?


SIGH...


PLOD
PLOD


THAT'S YOUR VICTORY.
YOU NEED TO HAVE SOME CONFIDENCE IN YOURSELF.


SHF SHF
WHAT DO YOU WANT ME TO DO?


CHA-KURO.
NERI?
HUFF HUFF


YOU CAN'T CLIMB UP FROM THERE.
IF YOU WANT TO COME UP, GO AROUND TO THE BACK.

HOP
HOP
I CAN'T REACH.

I'LL HELP YOU.

SHUU

NERI?

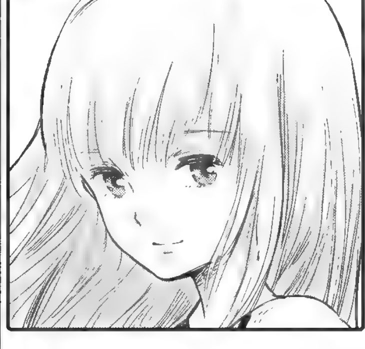
WHEN DID SHE...?

CHAKURO.

DO YOU WANT SOME-THING?

Why do they want to talk to me?

I can't do anything.

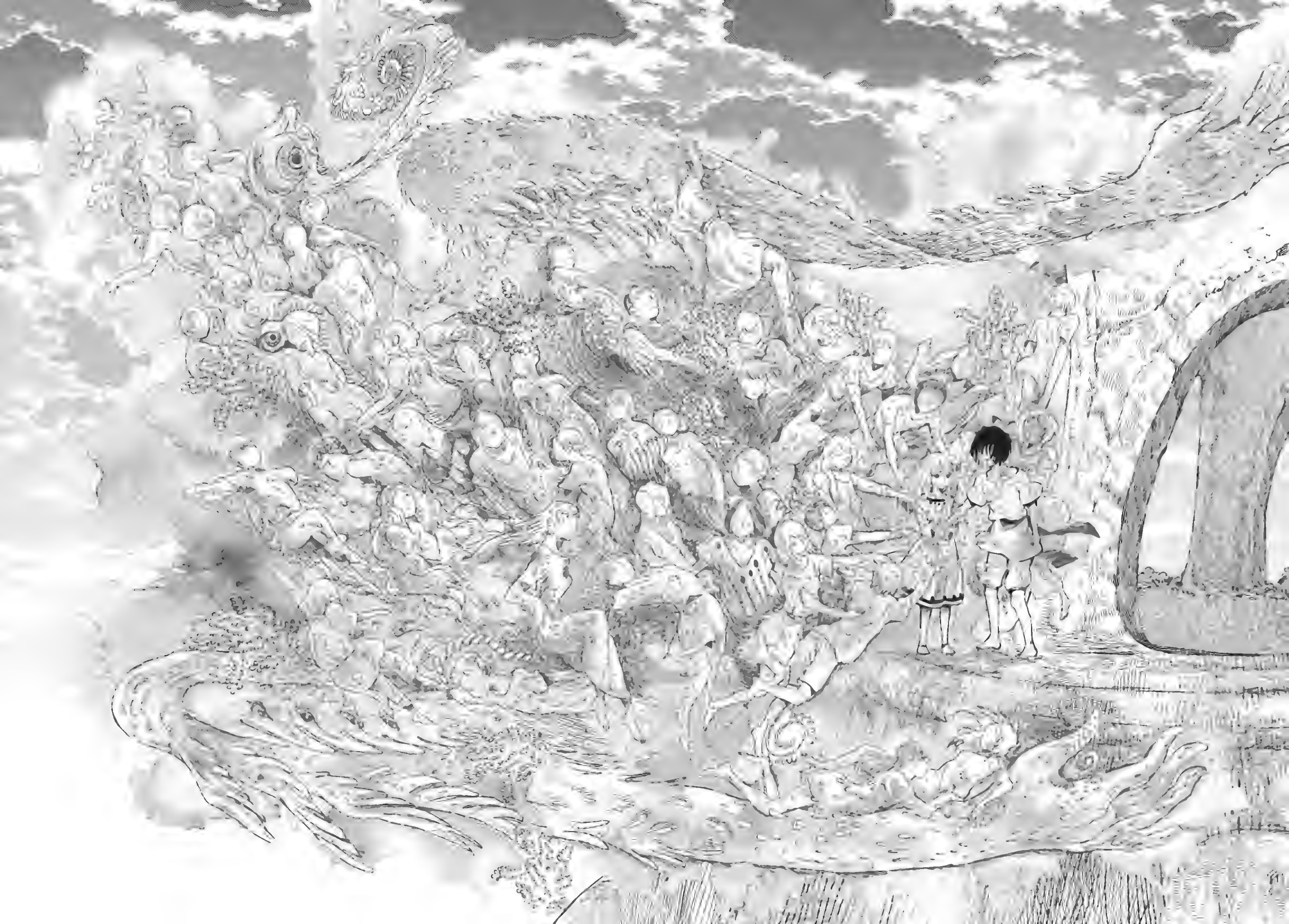









THE SOULS OF THOSE WHO HAVE GONE BEFORE...
...HAVE DIFFUSED INTO IT.
SEE...
GLEAM
LOOK HERE...
GLEAM
WHAT IS THAT?
FWSHAA




THIS...
THESE PEOPLE...
SHU


!
SAMI ?!
YOU'RE ALIVE...?
!
You know...
...


I...
...I wanted to marry you, Chakuro.
SAMI.
I-I LOVED YOU TOO.
WAIT!
I DIDN'T CARE IF WE GREW UP AND DIED YOUNG...
...AS LONG AS WE WERE TOGETHER...
...BUT...


...EVEN A MODEST WISH LIKE THAT DIDN'T COME TRUE...
I HAVE NOTHING LEFT HERE.
TAKE ME OVER TO YOUR SIDE.
I can't do that.
Because...
...you have a duty to perform, Chakuro.

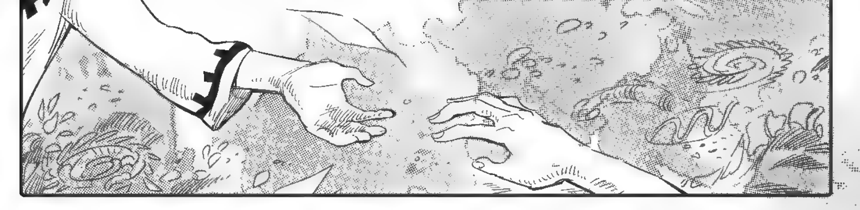

WAIT!
DUTY?
SKIP SKIP
That's right.
You are a true archivist.
MAYOR TAISHA ...
If we keep going like this, the Mud Whale will be destroyed...
...without anyone knowing the truth about our island.

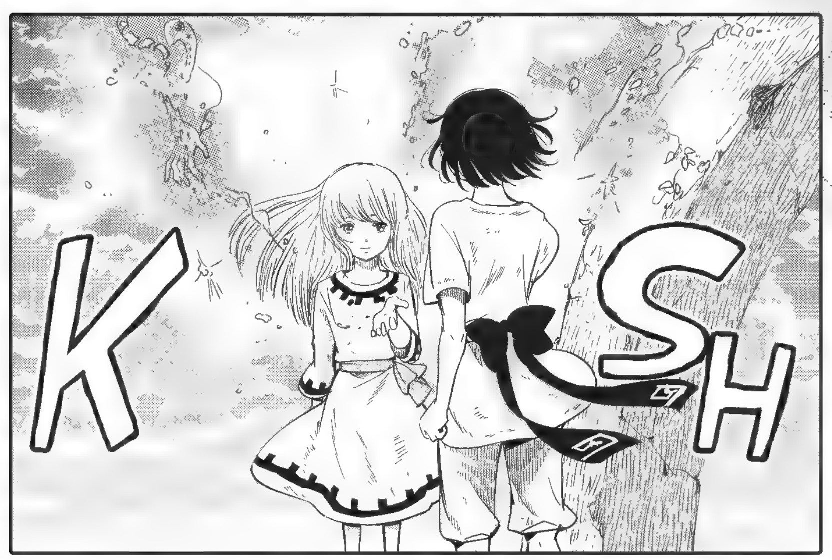

We will disappear.
You need to see this through to the end.
FWSH
And...
...the end of this island...
...has not come just yet.
RUSTLE
KOSSH
OH!


DIG
DIG


PLIP
OUNI?
KSSH
SUOU.
PFF
PFF


LYKOS
...!





BYUUUU

NERI...

WHAT WAS THAT?

HEY...

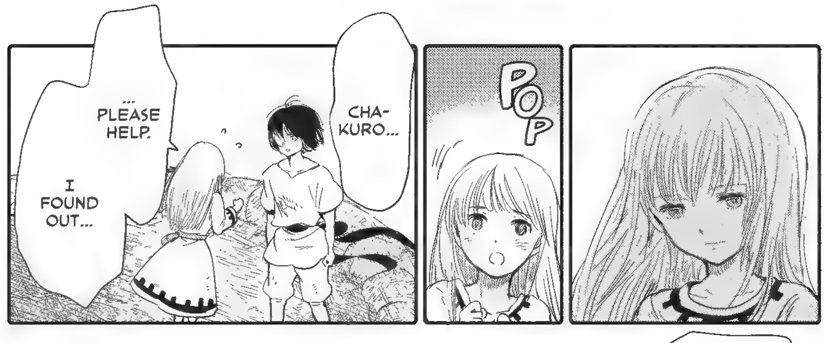
...DID YOU SEE SAMI AND THE OTHERS?

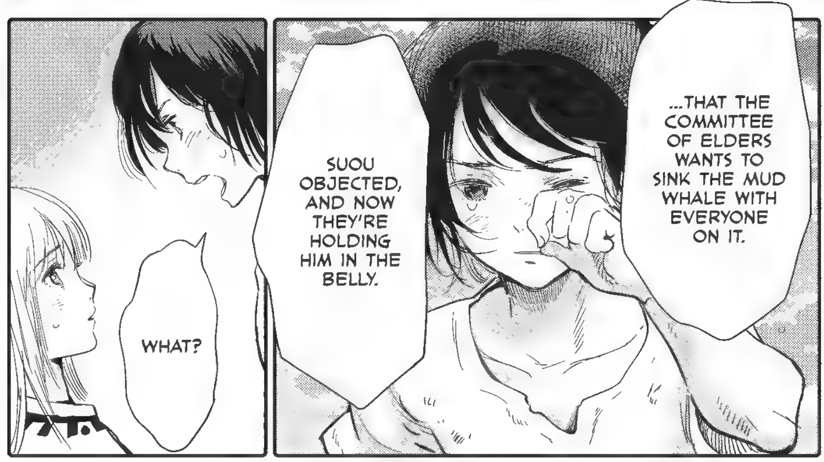


YOU CAN VIVIDLY SENSE PEOPLE'S FEELINGS.

YOU MAY THINK YOU CAN'T DO ANYTHING...

...BUT IF YOU DON'T HOLD EVERYONE TOGETHER, IT'S ALL OVER.


POP
CHA-KURO...
...PLEASE HELP.
I FOUND OUT...


...THAT THE COMMITTEE OF ELDERS WANTS TO SINK THE MUD WHALE WITH EVERYONE ON IT.
SUOU OBJECTED, AND NOW THEY'RE HOLDING HIM IN THE BELLY.
WHAT?

THERE'S ONE PERSON WHOSE HEART YOU NEED TO LIBERATE IN ORDER TO SAVE EVERY-ONE.
GO TO HER.


!
CHA-KURO...
LYKOS...
UHN! PULL ME UP.
I'M GOING TO FALL.

LYKOS.

GRAB

THE SHIP I WAS ON, LÝKOS...

...WAS SUPPOSED TO ATTACK FÁLAINA.

NO ONE KNEW ANYTHING...

WE WERE TOLD THAT THIS WAS A HELLISH ISLAND.




DON'T WORRY.
I'VE SEEN INTO YOUR HEART TWICE.
I BELIEVE IN YOU.

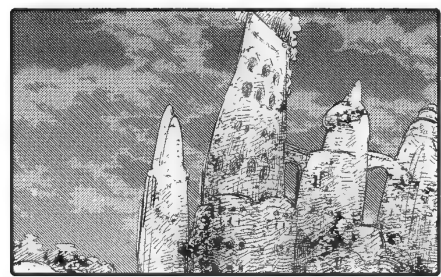



HEY, LYKOS...
I NEED YOUR HELP.

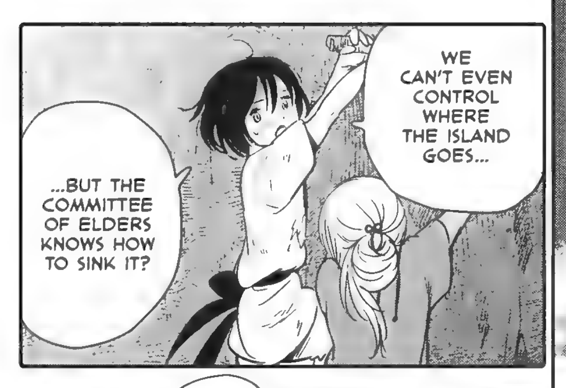

THE MUD WHALE IS IN CRISIS.


IF WE DON'T DO SOMETHING, IT'S GOING TO SINK INTO THE SEA OF SAND.
!


DISGUISE YOURSELF WITH THIS.



I DON'T GET IT.


WE CAN'T EVEN CONTROL WHERE THE ISLAND GOES...
...BUT THE COMMITTEE OF ELDERS KNOWS HOW TO SINK IT?


...
I MIGHT KNOW HOW.
WHAT?


IS THERE A LOCATION THE COMMITTEE OF ELDERS IS KEEPING HIDDEN?
ANYWHERE IN THE MUD WHALE WHERE NO ONE HAS BEEN?
...

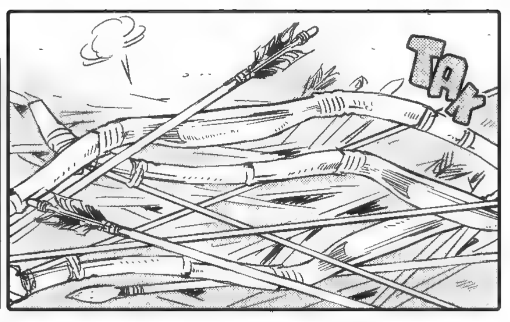

IN THE BELLY...
...DOWN BELOW.
ONE AREA IS USED AS A PRISON...
...BUT I HEARD THERE'S ANOTHER AREA THAT NO ONE CAN GET TO.


ZZ
AHH!
WHOA!
SH


ZZLLSSSH
THUD
OWW.


I THINK SUOU IS TRAPPED IN THE BELLY...
WE NEED TO RESCUE HIM TOO.


DASH DASH DASH



TAK

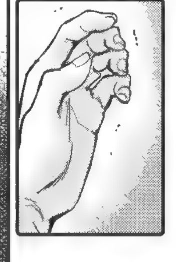
TMP
TMP

CRASH
OOPH!

RATTLE
RATTLE
MAKE SURE TO SEPARATE OUT THE ARROWS THAT CAN'T BE USED.
GOT IT.
SEVEN DAYS WILL GO BY BEFORE YOU KNOW IT.

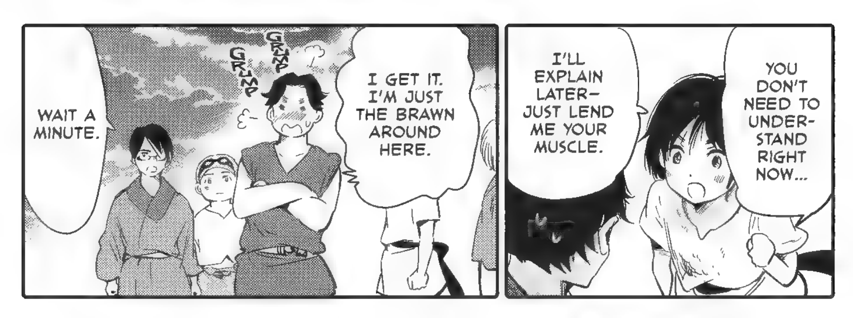
DIZZY
HUH ...?

MASOH, ARE YOU OKAY?
...

UH, YEAH.


MASOH!
NEZU... RO...
DASH
DASH


HEY, CHAKURO.
HUFF HUFF
WE'RE DOING MAINTE-NANCE...
...ON THESE BOWS AND ARROWS.
WHEN THEY COME BACK, WE'LL FIGHT THEM WITH THESE.
SNORT
NEVER MIND THAT...
PLEASE, HELP US.
WHAT?!
THE MUD WHALE IS GOING TO SINK?!
WE HAVE PEOPLE WHO CAN HELP.
WAIT A SEC, I HAVE NO IDEA WHAT YOU'RE...



IF YOU'RE GOING AGAINST THE COMMIT-TEE OF ELDERS...

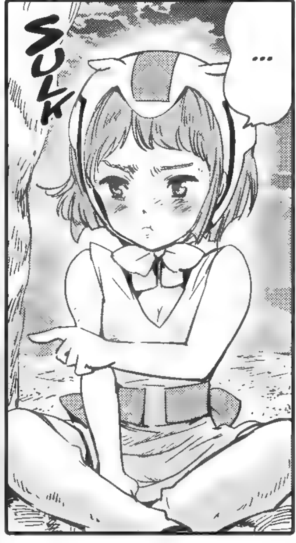
...THEN YOU'RE GOING UP AGAINST THE VIGILANTES.

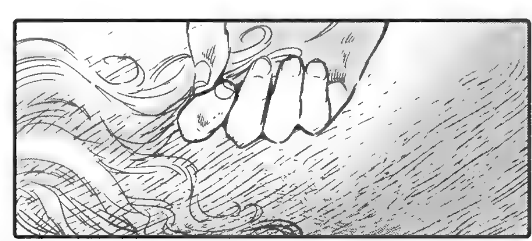
DO YOU THINK WE'LL BE ABLE TO DO IT?

...


TMP
KICHA.


WHERE IS HE?


SULK
...




OUNI!


?

PLEASE SAVE EVERYONE ON THE MUD WHALE.



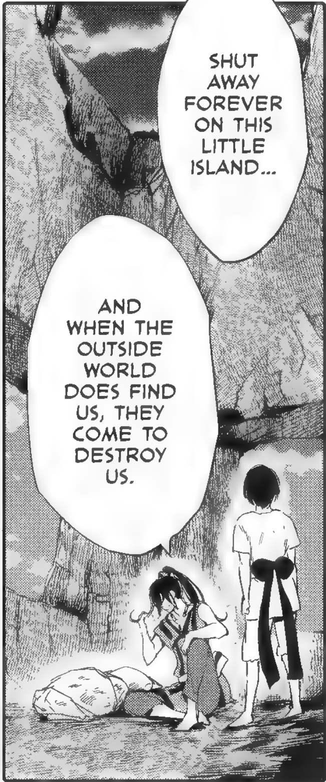


This World Is Beautiful Because... -The End-

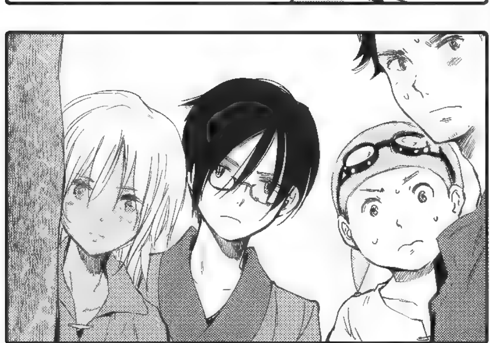

Chapter 8
In the Womb

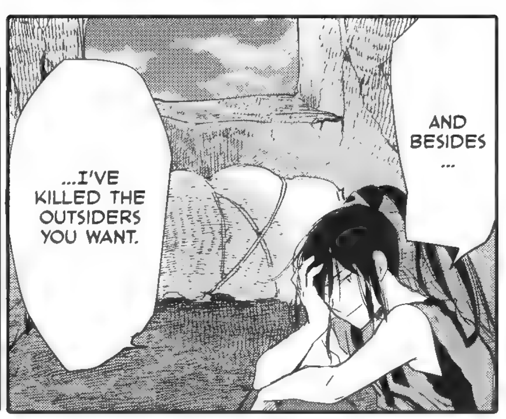

IF WE DON'T DO SOMETHING, THE MUD WHALE WILL SINK INTO THE SAND...
...AND ALL OUR HOPES WILL VANISH!
OUNI...
...PLEASE HELP US.
PLEASE.
HA HA HA HA HA!


WHAT HOPES ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT?

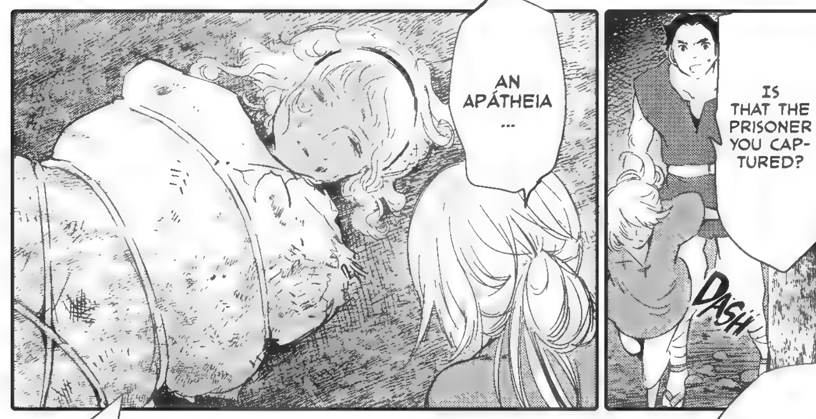

SHUT AWAY FOREVER ON THIS LITTLE ISLAND...
AND WHEN THE OUTSIDE WORLD DOES FIND US, THEY COME TO DESTROY US.


IS THERE ANYTHING WORTH SAVING HERE?




AND BESIDES ...
...I'VE KILLED THE OUTSIDERS YOU WANT.


GASP
!


AN APÁTHEIA ...


SHE'S A SOLDIER WHO'S HAD HER EMOTIONS REMOVED.
SHE'S STILL ALIVE.


IS THAT THE PRISONER YOU CAPTURED?
DASH
A GIRL...THEY MAKE GIRLS LIKE THIS SOLDIERS?
HANDS OFF ...!

SHE DOESN'T HAVE A HEART.

THERE'S NO NEED TO TREAT HER LIKE A PERSON.

WHATEVER I DO TO HER...

...IF I TURN MY BACK ON THIS RAG OF AN ISLAND...

NONE OF IT'S YOUR BUSINESS.

FWAAA

GLOM

...

THAT'S A LIE, RIGHT?

YOU'RE NOT TELLING US YOUR REAL FEELINGS, OUNI.

!


YOUR FRIENDS ARE DEAD AND YOUR DREAMS AND HOPES OF THE OUTSIDE WORLD HAVE BEEN DESTROYED ...
I GET THAT YOU'VE LOST HOPE.
BUT... I SAW YOUR REAL FEELINGS.
YOU...
...WANT TO PROTECT EVERYONE, BUT YOU DON'T KNOW HOW, AND THAT UPSETS YOU, RIGHT?
THWAK
CHA-KURO!
THUD


EVERY LAST ONE OF YOU...
...HAS MADE UP YOUR MIND ABOUT US.
DON'T GO MAKING ASSUMPTIONS ABOUT ME...!





Suou, who had been appointed mayor, was now imprisoned...

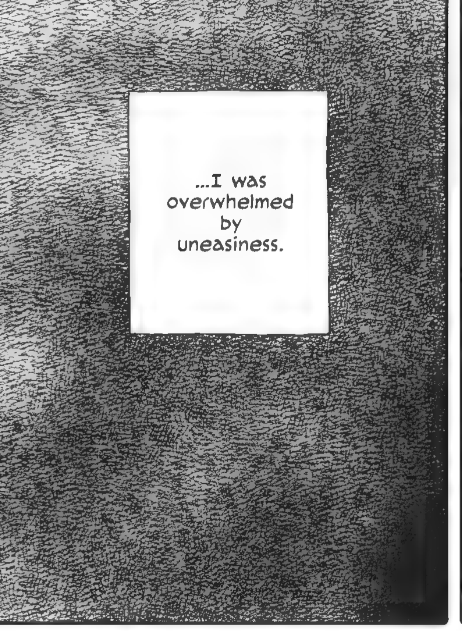
...and the Committee of Elders was trying to sink the Mud Whale with all of us aboard.

The Mud Whale's workings were all hidden in the Belly.

I didn't want to believe it.

I still hadn't come to grips with the world Neri had showed me.





There were only a few paths leading down to the Belly of the Mud Whale.

But that day the Vigilante Corps, the peace-keepers of the Mud Whale, had all of the entrances blocked.

PEEK


SO THERE *IS* SOME-THING DOWN THERE...
CRK
DON'T WORRY...
I'M GETTING THROUGH.
AARGH!
HEY...
...STOP!
THUMP
YANK
SHOVE
JAB


SORRY ABOUT THAT...
IT'S AN EMER-GENCY.
WOW, MASOH!
HUMPH.
I TURNED DOWN A POSITION IN THE VIGILANTES, YOU KNOW?
RAAH!
!!


GAH!
REIN-FORCE-MENTS HAVE ARRIVED!


I CAN'T DO THIS ALL BY MYSELF.
I NEED YOUR HELP!
SHUP
EEK!


WE DON'T USUALLY USE THYMIA MUCH.
...
SHEESH, YOUNG MARKED THESE DAYS!
PEEK


SHUU


OH.
CHAKKI! ♪

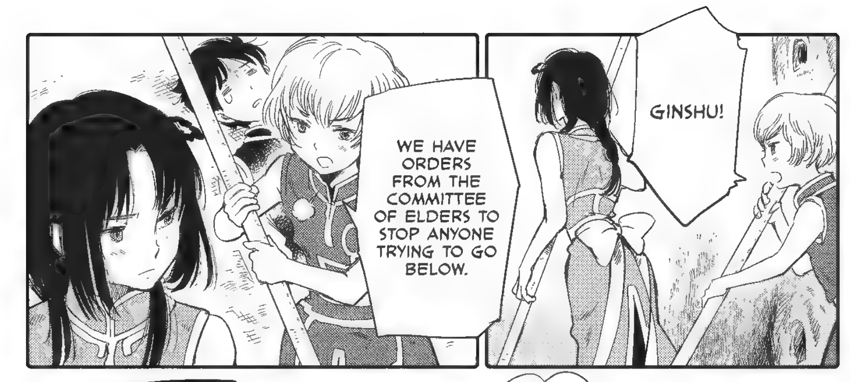

SHOOM
WE CAN'T GET THROUGH THAT MANY!




SHUP
What happened to your face, Chakki?
Were you being naughty? Did you fall?
POKE POKE POKE POKE POKE POKE POKE
Oww!
...
HMMG
M–
MISS...
MISS GINSHU !!


I WANT TO GET THROUGH.
LET ME THROUGH...
...PLEASE, MISS GINSHU.
AWWW...

HEY, GINSHU, WHAT ARE YOU—
THW
AK
HUH ...?
WOBBLE
KLAK

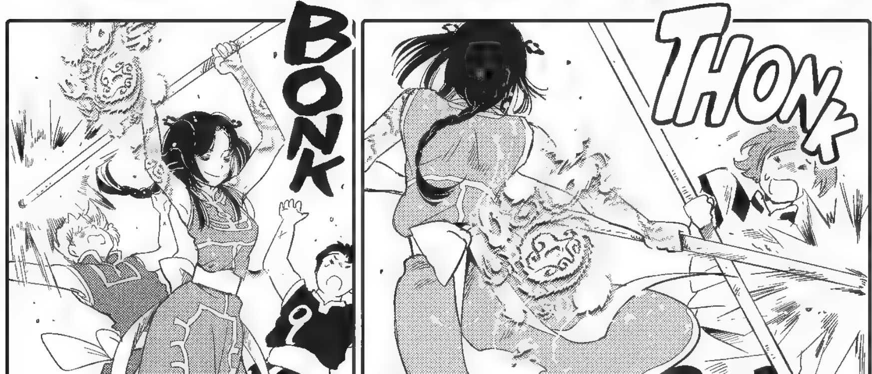


I DON'T UNDERSTAND WHY THEY WOULD GIVE THOSE ORDERS.

HOO

BUT I DO UNDERSTAND THAT CHAKKI IS IN TROUBLE.

GYUYUYU

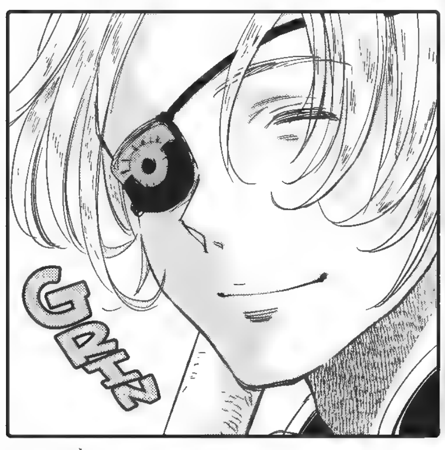



THIS IS ALL...
HEE HEE HEE
...FOR MY SWEET CHAKKI!
PSSHU
BUT...
...WHERE IS CHAKKI?
CHAKKI ?!
CHAKKI, WHEN DID YOU BECOME FRIENDS WITH THE VIGILANTES?
DASH DASH
IT'S NOT CHAKKI.
SWOOK
THANK YOU, GINSHU.
OH!


HMM HMM♪


THE COMMANDER OF THE VIGILANTES!

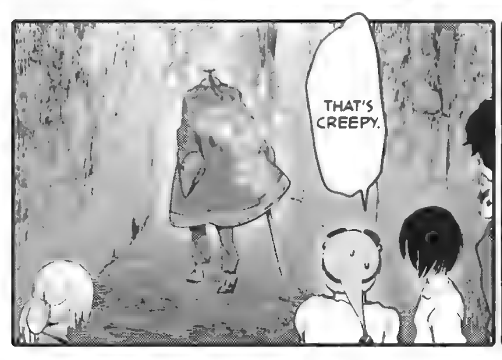

OUT OF THE FRYING PAN, INTO THE FIRE.


GAHZ

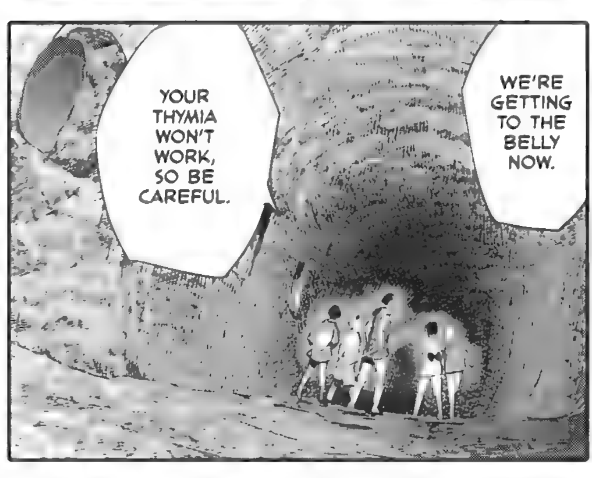

FWOOSH
!


WOOSH
WHAT AN INTENSE AURA.
HE'S VERY STRONG.
OF COURSE HE IS!
ONLY PEOPLE WITH HIGH THYMIA ABILITIES CAN JOIN THE VIGILANTES.
HE'S THE HEAD, SO HE'S THE STRONGEST.
TROMP
TROMP
YOU COULD SAY HE'S THE STRONGEST ON THE MUD WHALE.
*IF YOU DON'T COUNT **HIM,** THAT IS.*
THIS ISN'T GOOD. THIS COULD BE IT FOR US.
KSSH


SHUU
♪
HUH?


THAT'S CREEPY.


WHAT WAS *THAT*? THAT THREW ME OFF.

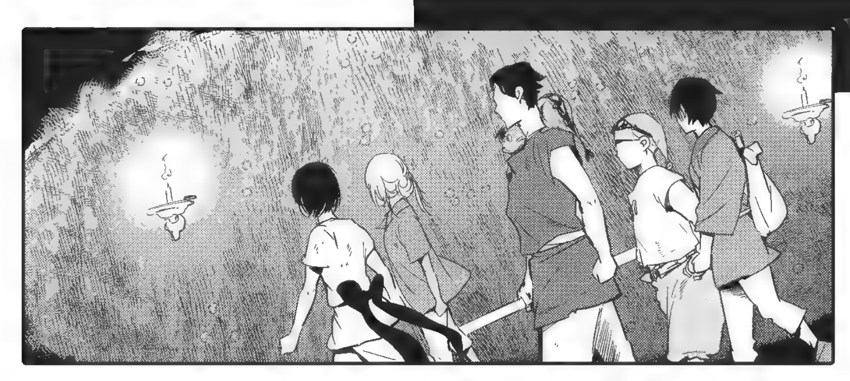

WE'RE GETTING TO THE BELLY NOW.
YOUR THYMIA WON'T WORK, SO BE CAREFUL.


NEVER MIND.

I THOUGHT I FELT YOUR PRESENCE.
DID YOU COME TO HELP THOSE KIDS?
...




SHUU
OKAY!
THWOK
HERE YOU GO.
FWOOSH
IF YOU WANT TO GET THROUGH...
...TAKE ME OUT.
WOOSH
LET'S HAVE SOME FUN. ♪
HOO



WHOOOO

IT GOT QUIET ALL OF A SUDDEN.

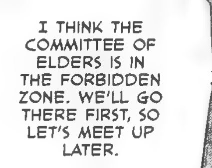
JOINK
SO THAT'S THE FORBIDDEN ZONE.
You're so strong...

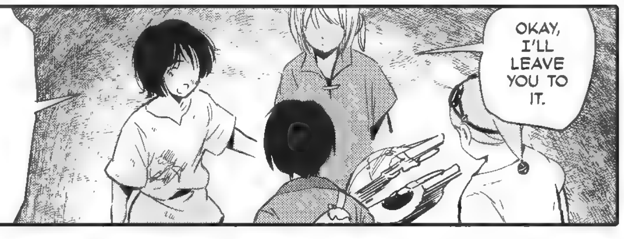
I WONDER WHERE THEY'RE HOLDING SUOU?

WE'LL GO AROUND TO THE PRISON AND LOOK FOR SUOU.

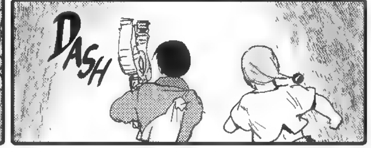

WE MADE THIS GADGET IN THE STUDIO. IT'LL CUT THROUGH THE PRISON LOCKS.
KA SNK
I CAN'T BELIEVE YOU MADE THAT!


LEAVE IT TO US.
SUOU IS OUR BELOVED MAYOR, RIGHT?

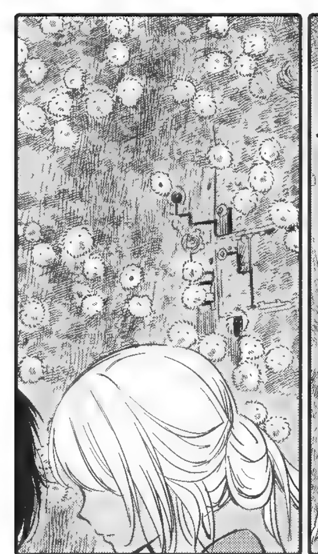

OKAY, I'LL LEAVE YOU TO IT.

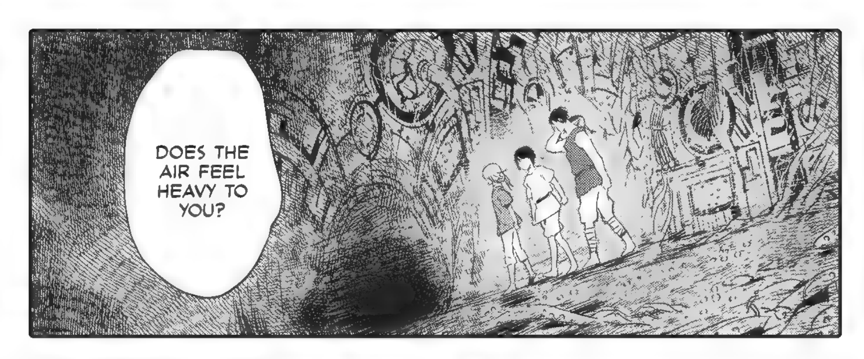

I THINK THE COMMITTEE OF ELDERS IS IN THE FORBIDDEN ZONE. WE'LL GO THERE FIRST, SO LET'S MEET UP LATER.


YUP!

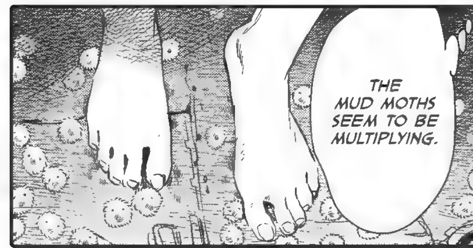

DASH


TMP TMP









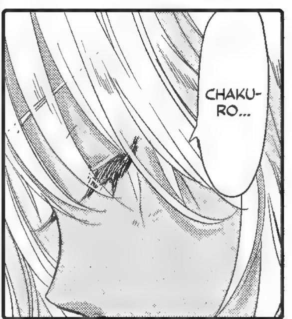
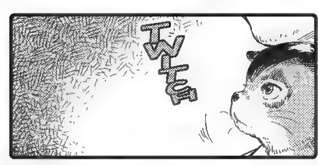
HEY, LYKOS...

...WHAT'S DOWN HERE?

HOW CAN THE MUD WHALE BE SUNK?

WAIT, YOU BROUGHT US DOWN HERE WITHOUT KNOWING?

SORRY.


YOU DO KNOW.

CHAKU-RO...

TWITCH

HEY...
...THERE'S A LIGHT.

IT'S SOME-THING...
...YOU'VE TOUCHED BEFORE.

!!








A
NOUS...

LIKE
THAT
THING
ON YOUR
ISLAND.

I
DIDN'T
KNOW
THERE
WAS A
NOUS IN
THE MUD
WHALE.

FOR SHIPS THAT FLOAT ON THE SEA OF SAND, A NOUS IS LIKE THE HEART.

IF YOU DESTROY THE NOUS, THIS SHIP... THE MUD WHALE WILL SINK.

GASP

SO YOU'VE MADE IT...

SHUU

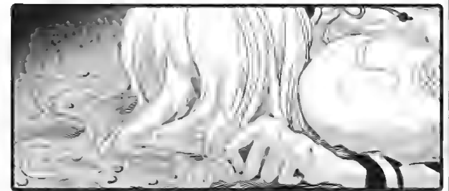
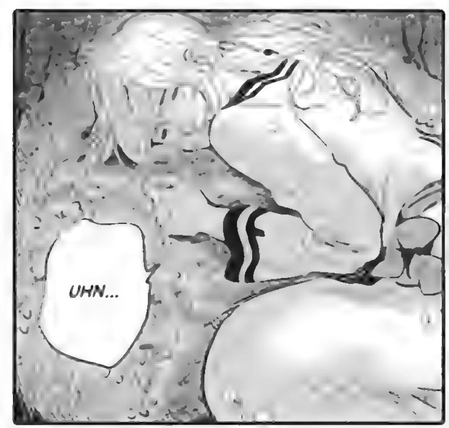
...GIRL FROM THE FOREIGN ISLAND.

NERI.

I SEE YOU KNOW WHAT'S GOING ON.

BUT IT'S TOO LATE.
SHA
CRII CRII
NOOOO-!
HSSSH
HSSSH

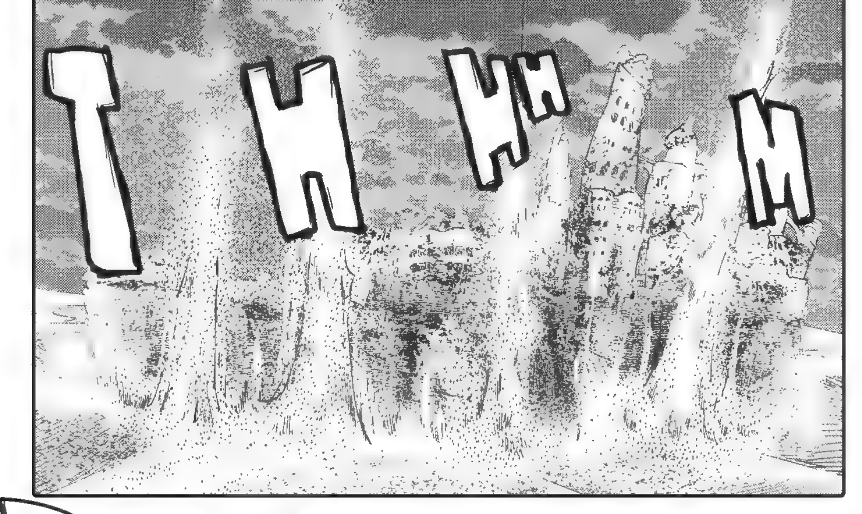

THNK
THNK
THNK



UHN...

RMMBBL

RMMBL
!

WHERE AM I?


THHHM

RRMMM
W-WHAT?!
!!
WHAT IS IT NOW?!
CRAP.
BL
AHH!
I CAN'T BELIEVE THE MUD WHALE IS SHAKING SO MUCH!


CRACK
KSSSH
RHOO
I GUESS IT'S STARTED.
KSSSH
AHH--!
DON'T STOP NOW.
WE'LL ALL BE DEAD IN A FEW HOURS ANYWAY.
CRASH


WHY DON'T WE...
...KEEP PLAYING UNTIL IT ALL ENDS? ♪
FWISH
IS IT REALLY GOING TO SINK?
KLANG
THAT'S RIGHT.
WE'RE ALL GOING TO DIE.
AND THAT'S OKAY WITH YOU.


CHAK
IT'S NOT ABOUT WHETHER IT'S OKAY.
DO YOU HAVE THAT KIND OF ATTACHMENT TO YOUR LIFE?
I DON'T.
LIVING IS HARD.
WHOOSH
YOU DEVELOP THE SKILLS TO NAVIGATE THE WORLD YOU'RE BORN INTO.
IF YOU DON'T EXCEL, YOU GET WORN DOWN.
THIS SHIP...
...FAILED TO NAVIGATE.


WHAT'S THE POINT OF BEING GLAD, THEN SAD BY TURNS?
SHING
SHING
NEXT TIME, I'D RATHER COME BACK...
...AS DUST IN THE AIR, OR MAYBE A BLADE OF GRASS OR AN INSECT OR SOMETHING.
PEOPLE ARE A PAIN.
THUMP
THE HEART...
IT GETS IN THE WAY.
THUD
FWAA


LET'S BE FREE...
...IN THE SAND.
YOU AND I CAN BOTH BE SAVED FROM THE PAIN OF LIVING.
THWOK


TAK
YOU DON'T GET TO MAKE THOSE DECISIONS.


YOU WANT TO DISCARD YOUR WORLD...
...BUT THAT'S NOT *OUR* WORLD.
WE DECIDE WHAT WE WANT!!


We were born into the small world...
...of the Mud Whale.
When I learned of the outside world, the thing that confounded me the most...
...was that there are so many lives swirling beyond our island.
A mind-boggling number of people going about their days.
Just picturing it overwhelms me.

A single person overflows with information to record.

It's *records*.

And it's not just lives.

Even just on the Mud Whale, if we stacked up the records of our souls, they would reach into the heavens.

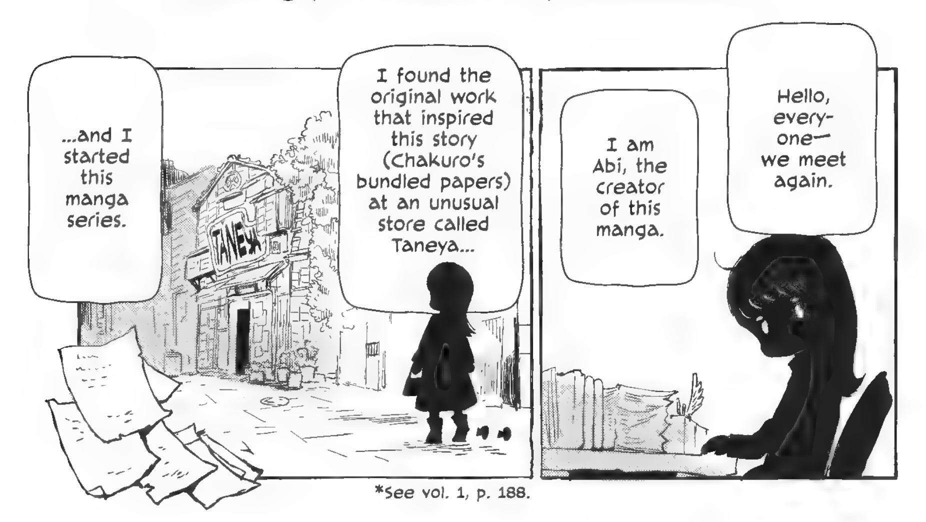



WE NEED FÁLAINA'S TERMINATION TO BE COMPLETE.
DON'T LEAVE YET.
DASH
HURRY UP AND SHOOT.
LYKOS!


No matter how scared and sad I get...
...I don't want to give up being an archivist.
TSSH
TSSH

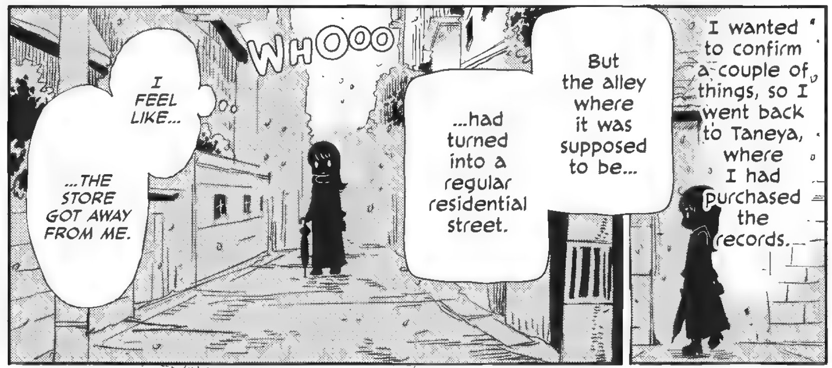
LYKOS
!!
I don't
want us
to end.
In the Womb -The End-
Children of the Whales volume 2 -The End-

Afterward
Looking for Children of the Whales



*See vol. 1, p. 188.





Never mind.

So about the differences between the records and the manga...

THIS SCENE FROM THE SAND BURIAL.

For instance...

The casket is full of flowers...

...like this in the manga.

But in reality, there doesn't seem to have been a place where they grew flowers on the Mud Whale.

(In the manga, there are fields on the farm, but I think they were actually mostly covered with food crops.)

According to the records, the casket was a simple, loosely woven basket made from the stalks of the oomasagochiku bamboo.

Oomasagochiku leaves were spread inside instead of flowers...

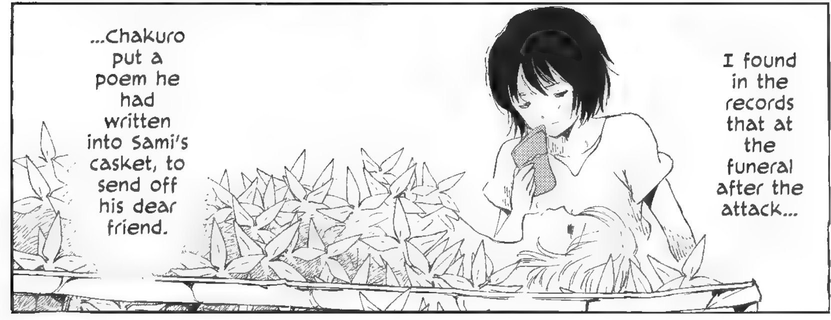
...and the deceased were unclothed.

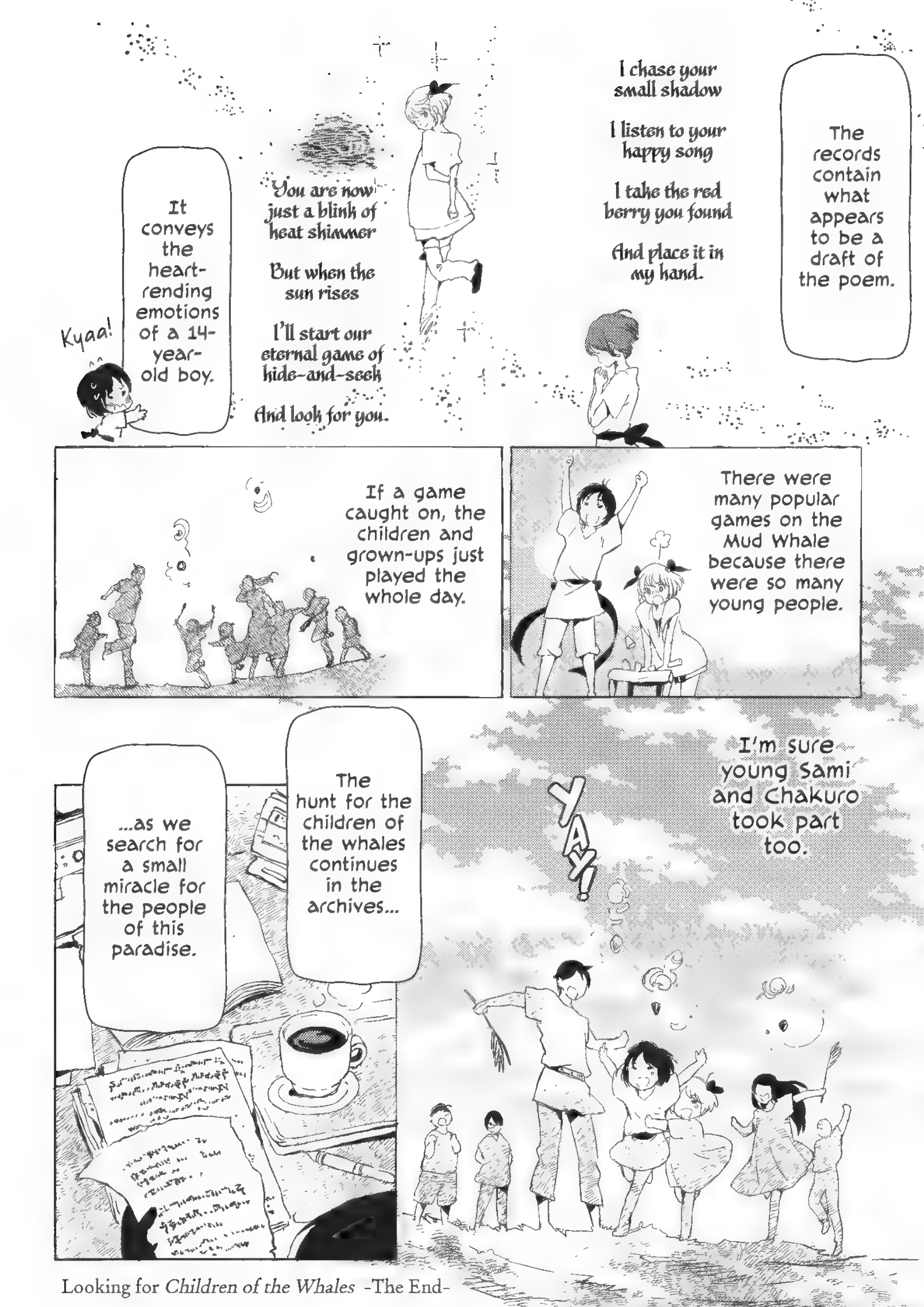
The reason the casket was loosely woven and the deceased wore nothing was to make it easier for them to disintegrate into the Sea of Sand.

Oomasagochiku leaves were very sacred on the Mud Whale.

IT'S JUST THAT IT APPEARED TOO SIMPLE FROM OUR PERSPECTIVE, AND I DIDN'T WANT PEOPLE TO GET THE WRONG IDEA AND FEEL BADLY FOR THE DECEASED.

So in the manga, I drew the coffin as a densely woven basket with a lid lined with flowers and kept the deceased clothed.





Looking for *Children of the Whales* -The End-



A Note on Names

Those who live on the Mud Whale are named after colors in a language unknown. Abi Umeda uses Japanese translations of the names, which we have maintained. Here is a list of the English equivalents for the curious.

Aijiro	pale blue
Benihi	scarlet
Buki	kerria flower (*yamabuki*)
Chakuro	blackish brown (*cha* = brown, *kuro* = black)
Ginshu	vermillion
Kicha	yellowish brown
Kuchiba	decayed-leaf brown
Masoh	cinnabar
Neri	silk white
Nezu	mouse gray
Nibi	dark gray
Ouni	safflower red
Ro	lacquer black
Sami	light green (*asa* = light, *midori* = green)
Shinono	the color of dawn (*shinonome*)
Suou	raspberry red
Taisha	red ocher
Tobi	reddish brown like a kite's feather



If I could live on the Mud Whale, I would be the cleaner and sweep the mountains of sand every day.

—Abi Umeda

ABI UMEDA debuted as a manga creator with the one-shot "Yukokugendan" in *Weekly Shonen Champion. Children of the Whales* is her eighth manga work.



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